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# A P I C T U R E O F E N G L A N D:

CONTAINING  
A DESCRIPTION OF THE LAWS, CUSTOMS, AND  
MANNERS OF ENGLAND.

Interpersed with curious and interesting Anecdotes of

Present King of Denmark	General Smith	Mrs. Abington
Prince of Wales	Lord Camden	Mr. Wedgewood
Late Empress Maria Theresa	Lord Thurlow	Chevalier D'Eon
Louis XV.	Lord Kenyon	Lord Stormont
Duke de Choiseul	Duke of Bridgewater	Mr. Villette
Late Duke of Bedford	Lord Chatham	General Gansell
Duchess Dowager of Bedford	Lord Sackville	Late Mr. Garrick
Duke of Northumberland	General Burgoyne	Mr. Foote
Duchess of Devonshire	Mr. Luttrell	Mrs. Cornelys
Lord Bute	Mr. Wilkes, and several other Aldermen	Mrs. Siddons
Lord North		Barry
Lord Mansfield		Woodward
Mr. Fox	Mr. Burke	Weston
Mr. Pitt	Mr. Horne Tooke	Henderfon
Lord Sandwich	Late Lord Clive	Palmer
Admiral Keppel	Mr. Gibbon	Mr. Kelly, &c. &c. &c.

By M. D'ARCHENHOLZ,  
*Formerly a Captain in the Service of the King of Prussia.*

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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V O L. II.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for EDWARD JEFFERY, Pall-Mall.

MDCCLXXXIX.



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Barbarous Punishment in Scotland—Singular  
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CHAPTER I.

*Public Executions: Earl of Ferrers—Alderman Sayre—The celebrated Chevalier d'Eon—Mons. de Morande—Dr. Dodd—An Anecdote—Barbarous Punishment in Scotland—Singular Law with regard to Women—Prohibitions against Swearing—Hunting of Animals—The Lord Chancellor—Free Masons—Strict Observation of the Letter of the Law.*

ENGLISH Liberty would actually be what it appears to the ignorant, a mere chimaera, if the laws of that country did not act with the same vigour against the nobility as the people.



An infraction of them, whether it is in regard to property or life, is punished without any respect to the rank or fortune of the culprit; and although no bounds are set by the constitution to the mercy of the king, yet he never protects those criminals who, surrounded with titles and dignities, imagine that they are thereby sheltered from the punishment which the law denounces against their actions. It is indeed certain that in England, as in all other countries, a thousand machines may be put in motion, and a multitude of intrigues practised to blind the eyes of the monarch, and procure pardon for criminals of distinction; this is a custom which neither the sovereign nor the legislature can abolish without overturning the constitution.

I shall produce some examples of this impartiality from the history of our own times, a method which I intend to pursue as often as possible in the course of this work, and which is undoubtedly more entertaining and instructive, than long and fatiguing arguments. Among other advantages it will enable the reader to supply my incapacity by allowing him to form his own judgment on facts, for the authenticity of which I pledge myself.

Every

Every body knows that after the battle of Culloden many noblemen were executed for their attachment to the house of Stuart; but for more than a century before that no peer of the realm had been condemned to death for any other crime than treason.

The earl of Ferrers, uncle to the present lord of that name, about twenty-eight years since offered a melancholy instance of such a case by murdering his steward, not in the heat of passion, but in a cool premeditated manner. As he lived some time after the wound, his Lordship sent for a surgeon, who finding that it was mortal, informed a magistrate of the circumstance. The earl was upon this arrested and carried to the tower of London. As every citizen has a right to be tried by his equals, and the peers of England are a distinct body, the House of Lords are consequently sole judges in this kind of process. On these occasions they are all summoned, not as legislators, but as members of a judicial tribunal, and their assemblies are not convoked in the usual place, but in Westminster-hall, which is more commodious on account of its situation and immense space.

This was the august tribunal which took cognizance of the process against lord Ferrers, and condemned him by an unanimous decree. The laws ordain that the body of a murderer shall be anatomised, and this circumstance afflicted him in a very sensible manner. He heard his sentence pronounced with the utmost composure ; but when that part which mentioned his dissection was read, he instantly exclaimed " God forbid !" It was in vain that he requested to be beheaded instead of being hanged on a gibbet ; he desired to die in the tower where his ancestor the earl of Essex had been executed, but he was told that he must prepare to suffer at Tyburn in common with the vilest criminals.

The only favour they would grant him was to allow the use of his own carriage in the journey instead of being drawn in a cart : an indulgence which Dodd and others afterwards experienced.

He accordingly repaired to Tyburn in a mourning coach, his horses covered with crape, and his servants clothed in black. On his arrival

arrival be mounted the scaffold, and was obliged to remain there a whole hour with the rope about his neck. This period being elapsed, one of the sheriffs who accompanied him mentioned that his time was expired, and took leave of him. His lordship on this immediately took a leap; the scaffold was removed, and the body left suspended in the air.

The corpse was afterwards carried to Surgeon's Hall, where it was exposed naked for three whole days, that the law might be fulfilled in every point. The hangman shewed the rope with which he had been executed, and such is always the folly of the people, that many thousands paid a shilling apiece for the sight of it. The body was afterwards deposited in the family vault, and the brother of the defunct immediately took the title.

The peeresses enjoy the same privileges in regard to trial as the peers themselves, and it was in recollection of this that an illustrious \* princess thrown into prison a few years since, and dubious of her destiny, exclaimed, "Why am I not in my own dear country, where

\* The late queen of Denmark.

“ my trial would have been conducted publicly,  
 “ and by the most noble judges !”

It was in the year 1776 that the duchess of Kingston was accused of bigamy, while she was at Rome. At the first news of it, she immediately departed for England, notwithstanding she was sick, and even obliged to perform the journey in a litter. Soon after her arrival her trial commenced. I had the satisfaction of being a witness to this singular spectacle, which not a little resembled the pomp with which divine service is performed in *catholic countries*. Foreigners ridiculed the English for treating such trifling matters with so much importance, while engaged in an unfortunate war ; it was however impossible, without overturning the very foundation of the constitution, to refuse to hear her accuser or deny herself the privilege of defending her cause before that tribunal which her rank assigned to her. The trial was public and attended with the usual ceremonies, but with an uncommon concourse of people.

The president whom the king appoints for the occasion, bears the title of the Lord High Steward, a very eminent dignity, and which ends with the trial. The chancellor was invested



vested with this dignity, perhaps the greatest in the world, and presided holding a long taper wand in his hand as a mark of his office. Westminster-hall, the height of which is superior to most churches, allowed ample room for the amphitheatres which were erected on the occasion. The seats and boxes appropriated to the royal family, the peeresses, the members of the House of Commons, &c. were covered with the richest tapestry. It seemed to be a general *gala*; the passages were guarded with soldiers, who do not usually appear on these occasions: the peers, to the number of almost two hundred, the bishops and the judges in their robes, forming a semicircle, together with the high-steward at the foot of a throne erected for the king, although he is never present, formed altogether a superb and elegant appearance. At some distance a large table was placed for the secretaries of this great tribunal, and the centre of the circle was reserved for the accusers and the accused. The duchess had two of her women attending on her, a physician, a surgeon, an apothecary, a secretary, and six advocates. She was dressed in black, and her conduct, which was at once firm and noble throughout the whole, gained her the admiration of all the spectators. She

herself addressed the assembly with an inimitable dignity. Nevertheless she was convicted by the peers, who gave their judgment by rising up one after the other, and with their hands on their breasts declaring *on their honours* that she was guilty. The youngest baron begins, and they rise in the order of rank and creation.

The punishment inflicted by the law for bigamy is a red hot iron applied to the hand; the nobility however are exempted by an ancient privilege. The counsel for the duchess claimed this as a right, and the adverse party denied it: it was then that for the first time this unfortunate woman seemed to lose her resolution. She fainted and was carried away. She was at last allowed this favour, and escaped with a reprimand from the Lord High Steward, who concluded with an observation "that this was the last time when she could experience this indulgence."

Such was the conclusion of this singular process, which lasted six days. These six days seemed to be a festival to the whole nation. Although the court did not sit till ten o'clock, the hall was full by five in the morning. There  
were



were even ladies who repaired thither by break of day, magnificently dressed and ornamented with jewels, and remained till five at night. As it happened in the summer, a period when all the gentry are in the country, thousands were continually arriving from the remotest corners of the kingdom. Those who had not tickets, offered for them twelve, fifteen, and even twenty guineas apiece. A lady, who after all her endeavours could not procure one, being quite inconsolable for the bad success of her attempts, avowed in company that she would sooner sacrifice fifty guineas than not be a spectator. The duchess, on hearing of this ardent curiosity, observed, "If this lady longs so much to be in the hall, I am disposed to resign my place to her for nothing, and she will not then fail to see and be seen by all the world." She well knew that it was only the vanity of shewing herself that tormented her countrywoman, and not a wish to behold a scene which, although very interesting, had nothing agreeable in it. This kind of trial is peculiar to the nobility, and costs an immense sum to government.

It was also during my stay in London that

Sayre the banker was accused of high-treason. This gentleman, who is a native of America, is well known in the north of Germany, by his intrigues there in favour of his countrymen. He is now settled at George-Town in Maryland. He was an inhabitant of London, and in high reputation, when he had the audacity, at the beginning of the American contest, to attempt the execution of a project at once rash and imprudent. As almost the whole nation was discontented during that unfortunate war, he resolved to make himself master of the person of the king, carry him to the Tower, and keep him prisoner there until he had agreed to whatever was proposed to him. For this purpose he makes the necessary arrangements. He communicates part of his plan to Richardson, a captain of the guards, and requests his assistance. That officer promises to consider of it, and repairs instantly to the earl of Rochford, one of the secretaries of state, to whom he recounts the singular proposition that had been made to him, and confirms the truth of it by an oath. As this attempt was high treason, that minister imagined that it was his duty to take immediate cognizance of it. He accordingly issues a warrant, Sayre is apprehended and conducted to his house.

In

In the mean time the secretary of state having sent for sir John Fielding, and procured the attendance of Richardson, began the examination ; the prisoner however was too cunning to say any thing before the arrival of his counsel, to whom he had found means to send a note, informing him of his situation.

He was not mistaken in the zeal of that gentleman, who, throwing himself into a carriage as soon as he received the letter, made so much haste that he arrived a few minutes after the prisoner. He immediately requests to speak with Sayre ; but the minister, on being informed of his business, refuses to permit an interview. This answer provokes the barrister, who immediately sends word that *he insisted* on seeing his client, and *must* speak to him that very moment. What recompense would the boldness of this gentleman have met with in any other country ? Such a message to a secretary of state armed with such an extensive authority, in his own house, and in an affair of high treason ! the most moderate would without doubt have ordered him to be thrown out of the window.

In England, where nobody is above the laws,

and where the most powerful dare not to infringe them with impunity, they regulate their matters in another manner.

The counsel was immediately introduced, and he publicly informs the prisoner, that he ought not to answer to any interrogatories in that house. Sayre on this turning towards his Lordship observes, that he will follow the opinion of his lawyer, and that, as it was intirely useless, he beseeched him to ask no more questions. On this the minister commits him to the Tower. Bail is offered and refused. However, at the end of six days he is set at liberty, as the policy of the state did not then admit of his trial. Sayre however had no motives to prevent him from prosecuting the minister: he accuses him of having arrested him without sufficient cause, affirms that the warrant was illegal, commences an action for false imprisonment, and a verdict is found against the secretary of state for three thousand pounds.

The power of the laws and the extent of English liberty was never better illustrated than in the suit between the count de Guerchy and the chevalier d'Eon. As a particular account of this has never reached Germany, and  
the



the chevalier, with whom I was intimately acquainted, is not unknown there, it may not be improper here to mention some of the characteristic traits of this singular being.

D'Eon had already distinguished himself by his military and political talents at the courts of Warsaw and St. Petersburg, when he was sent to London with count de Guerchy, in the year 1763, in quality of secretary of legation. Soon after his arrival, the count, who was ambassador from France, returned to spend a few months at Paris, confiding the care of every thing to the chevalier, who was invested with the rank and title of minister plenipotentiary at the court of London. His transactions in that station having given great umbrage to the ambassador, he on his return testified his displeasure. This was soon followed by an entire rupture. Both of them complain to their court. The friends of the count were more powerful at Versailles than those of the chevalier; perhaps he had also the better cause; however, it is certain that his antagonist was disgraced. Thinking that he had now no occasion to preserve moderation, the chevalier soon broke all those ties by which he was connected with France. His resentment, which knew no bounds,  
made

made him even discover those state secrets which had been confided to his honour. He spoke openly concerning the late peace, affirmed that it had been purchased for money, mentioned the traitors, and even the sums that had been paid. A speech of this kind must necessarily excite the most lively sensations. It was not however thought proper to institute a suit against him, and his assertion was treated as an atrocious calumny. D'Eon, to silence such infamous reports, offered to adduce irrefragable testimony, and besides to particularise the very sums that had been sent from France to England for that purpose. This intrepid conduct immediately abashed those concerned in this dishonourable affair, and d'Eon was induced to concealment by a proposition not very ungrateful to the deranged state of his finances. It is well known that after this he lived several years in London perfectly at his ease.

But his situation was no ways to be envied. The court of St. James's and its partisans hated him as a traitor, who had been instigated to perfidy by the most venal motives. The people despised him for deviating from his resolutions on account of the most dishonourable impulse ; they said that he ought to have told  
all

all or nothing. The just resentment of the court of France, which left him every thing to apprehend, added not a little to his solicitude. He was obliged to be always on his guard; and was so fearful of being carried off, that he never went out on an evening unless accompanied by his friends. By this prudent conduct he frustrated many projects which were formed against him with equal art and boldness.

I shall not pretend to decide whether it is true or not that they tried to take him off by poison. It is however certain that he complained loudly of the count de Guerchy, who he said had made such an attempt in his own house.

He himself applied to a justice of the peace, gave information of the circumstance, swore to the facts, and promised to adduce proofs. This was in order to commence a criminal process against the count, who unfortunately thought himself, as ambassador from a peaceful monarch, entirely out of the reach of the laws. He even ridiculed such of his friends as testified any inquietude on the occasion, imagining that his rank and high favour at court would entirely shelter him from prosecution. He was  
however



however cited before a justice, and according to custom was obliged to appear in person. This supposed insult put him into a rage, and he immediately went to the minister, whose uneasiness not a little disconcerted the poor count, who measuring the power of a king of England by that of his own sovereign, expected nothing but a little pleasantry from the secretary of state. The term when he was obliged to make his appearance was short; every thing that could be done in his favour was put in practice to prolong it, and thus the minister plenipotentiary of his most christian majesty gained sufficient time to leave London in the night and escape to Calais. The chagrin occasioned by this sad catastrophe brought him in a short time to the grave.

The chevalier d'Eon remained in London till the year 1777, when some doubts having arisen concerning the sex of this extraordinary person, several policies were opened, and a prodigious number of betts made on the subject. Piqued at these doubts, the chevalier mentioned in the public papers that he would satisfy the whole world whether he was male or female on a certain day; and accordingly fixed the time and place.

It

It was a coffee-house in the city that he appointed for the exhibition of this singular scene to the curious. The concourse was prodigious. D'Eon appears clothed in the uniform of a captain of the French cavalry, and decorated with the cross of St. Louis. He addresses himself to the assembly, and informs them that he is of the sex whose appearance he assumes, and that he comes prepared to prove his assertion either with his *sword* or his *cane*.

The boldness of this speech had different effects on the auditory, some praised and others laughed at it; but the greatest part of the spectators heard with the utmost coldness the menace of the chevalier, who, perceiving that no person chose to accept the challenge, returned in triumph. It is nevertheless certain, that, to determine the betts, which amounted to almost a million sterling, he was promised very large sums of money if he would unequivocally unveil the mystery. I myself know that they offered him thirty thousand pounds sterling, which they were prepared to pay in ready money. Such a proposition was very tempting; and I am sure the chevalier would have disclosed the secret for a great deal less, if he had not been

been obliged to submit to the indelicate inspection of such a number of people.

As he refused to accede to the proposal, this uncertainty continued till his departure for France, when two of his countrymen swore that the chevalier was a woman, and this determined many wagers. But those who had large stakes would not allow their testimony was valid, although one of them, who pretended to be a physician, affirmed, that he had cured d'Eon of a certain disease; in fine, the generality of mankind are not even now agreed concerning the sex of this singular being.

Would it not be childish to believe that a person, who by nature and inclination had such a near resemblance to our sex, belonged to the other? The habit of a woman, which the chevalier is now obliged to wear by order of the king of France, and which is disgusting to him, cannot prove any thing. The farces daily acted in courts are so various, and the occasion of them often so impenetrable, that the change of dress is not to be regarded. I confess that every circumstance in the life of this singular person is wonderful and extraordinary.

nary. After having been guilty of the most perfidious treason against his native country, and when the bastille seemed ready to entomb him in one of its dungeons, he not only receives his pardon, but a pension of four thousand livres a year, and that too at a time when, entirely forgotten, he could no longer hurt the court of France. It is pretended that he had lived in great intimacy with Louis XV. who kept up a constant correspondence with him, and that it was on condition of delivering up his letters that he escaped punishment. But how can we reconcile this circumstance with his treason? Is it possible that the French minister should have been ignorant of his sex, when at thirty-six years of age he employed him at the court of London? The success of a ministerial intrigue, it is true, has often depended on a disguise of this kind; but it is inconceivable that in the present times, and during the administration of a duke de Choiseul, the court of Versailles would have nominated a woman for her minister plenipotentiary to a great nation such as England. It is also certain that d'Eon entered the college of Mazarine at Paris at twelve years of age, and was educated there. A gentleman who is at present a considerable merchant in London, and who was brought



brought up at the same seminary with him, betted twenty thousand pounds that his school-fellow was a man. His reasons were undoubtedly convincing. The mother and the relations must surely have known the sex of d'Eon. What mother could have been so inconsiderate as to leave a young girl at the age of twelve to the mercy of so many boys? A miracle only could conceal such a circumstance, and it seems that this miracle happened. Neither the amusements of a forward child nor the suppositions of the masters ever made this strange discovery. D'Eon was even admitted in London to a society, which, whatever regard in other respects it may evince towards the female sex, yet never entrusts them with their secrets. In the year 1770 he was deputy grand master of the French lodge of free masons, a body which at that time were quoted as a model, on account of the strictness of their rules.

I have thought it my duty to state my sentiments on this singular affair, because it seems to me never to have been before considered in the same point of view. My own knowledge, considering my intimacy with the chevalier, is very limited, and I think that the uncertainty of all impartial persons is fully justified  
until

until authentic proofs shall hereafter tear away the veil which still conceals the truth.

I cannot conclude the history of the chevalier without saying something of his antagonist Mons. de Morande ; a person well known by the singularity of his adventures. Having made some mistakes in Paris for which he was sent to prison, he went to England on his release, and published a book, which at that time made a great noise, entitled *Le Gazetier Cuirassé, or Scandalous Anecdotes of the Court of France, written in a free country, an hundred miles distant from the Bastile*. Soon after this he wrote the *Memoirs of the Countess Dubarry*, and sent a copy of the manuscript to herself, offering to suppress it for 2000 louis d'ors. That lady was so much afraid of the publication of it, that she sent the celebrated Beaumarchais to London, who concluded an agreement with the author, for a yearly pension payable in London, which was luckily for him signed by Louis XV. a few weeks before his demise. This gentleman was one of the witnesses who were examined concerning the sex of the chevalier.

The fate of the unfortunate Dr. Dodd, who was sacrificed to the laws of his country, is  
worthy

worthy of a place in this work. I myself was witness to two affecting scenes occasioned by this event, for I was present at his trial, and attended also when sentence of death was pronounced against him. This man was of a noble and interesting appearance, respectable on account of his profession, his eloquence, and his distinguished talents. The judges, the jury, the counsel, the spectators, all the world was bathed in tears. The prisoner also wept. "I despise," said he, "that stoic firmness which contemns death; it is a pagan virtue, in which I would not glory. I love life, and I am sorry to die."

This unfortunate man always flattered himself with the hope of a pardon, and his numerous friends interested themselves for this purpose with the same warmth as if the safety of the nation depended on his life. The jury who tried him recommended him to the mercy of the sovereign; whole corporations, the city of London itself presented a petition in his favour; the newspapers were every day filled with the good actions he had performed, and quoted the most interesting passages in his sermons. His writings were collected and reprinted; the poets sung his praises, and in fine every



every thing was practised to excite the sympathy of the nation for a criminal so much beloved. Having succeeded, his partisans drew up a petition to the king, and never before was such a one seen in England. It was carried by a porter who bent under the load, for it took up twenty-nine yards of parchment, and was signed by twenty-three thousand housekeepers. It is however remarkable that the great merchants and other people of condition would not subscribe to this petition, which did not succeed, as the council resolved that it was not proper on this occasion to extend the royal clemency.

Dodd himself attempted to procure the commiseration of Lord Mansfield, by a letter couched in the most affecting language. As it never has been printed I shall insert it here.

*My Lord,*

But a few days, and the lot of the most unhappy of created beings will be decided for ever. I know the weight of your Lordship's opinion. It is that which will undoubtedly decide, whether I am to die an ignominious death, or drag out the rest of my life in dishonourable banishment. O my Lord! do not

refuse to hear what I in my humility dare to oppose to the severity of the laws.

I feel how frightful my crime is; the sentence which condemns me is but too just: I however flatter myself, that, amidst all the reproaches cast against me on account of my crime, it will still be remembered how useful my charitable endeavours have been to that very society which I have injured. I ask for nothing but the preservation of my life, a life which I shall drag out in dishonour, and perhaps in misery! Have compassion, my Lord, on a man covered with infamy, without fortune, and without resource, but not however without fear at casting his eyes towards the abyss of eternity!

However great that misery which will be my lot, yet still allow me to live. That very misery under which I shall languish the rest of my days will forewarn all those who are witnesses of it, to beware of indulging their passions, and to guard against a fatal vanity and a spirit of dissipation.

For the last time, I conjure you, my Lord, to suffer me to live; and when you see me passing from the frightful dungeon which now  
encloses

encloses me, to an ignominious exile, be assured that justice will be sufficiently satisfied by the sufferings of him who is,

My lord,  
Your lordship's  
Most humble suppliant,  
WILLIAM DODD.

Newgate,  
June 11, 1777.

This letter did not prevent lord Mansfield from giving his opinion, that Dodd ought not to be pardoned. The reasons which he adduced were convincing: those very reasons also inclined the king to refuse a pardon, in 1783, to Ryland the celebrated engraver, whom he loved and patronised.

The friends of Dr. Dodd, seeing that all their solicitations were in vain, formed the project of restoring him to life after his execution. The delinquent was in all human probability made acquainted with the scheme, as he besought the hangman after he mounted the ladder that he would not *draw his feet*; a ceremony which is very common, and which the spectators themselves often do out of compassion. After he had hung the usual time his friends took the body, as is always allowed when the criminal has not been a murderer. A

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mourning-coach was in readiness to receive it: it was placed in a coffin without a lid, and brought with the utmost speed to the house of one of his acquaintances, where a physician used all the secrets of his profession for its resuscitation; but all his efforts were unsuccessful.

As my sole intention in recounting these transactions is to give, by an authentic recital of facts, a just idea of the present state of the laws of England, and the mode of putting them in execution, I will here recite an event that happened in London in the year 1778, and of which, to my great astonishment, I myself was a witness.

A young man twenty years of age was condemned to death on the evidence of a highwayman, who accused him of being an accomplice. His own bad character and the testimony of the robber, accompanied with all the requisite proofs, seemed to leave no doubt of his guilt. The unhappy wretch was in consequence of this conducted in a cart to Tyburn, with some other criminals. He remained with the rope about his neck, according to the permission which the law allows, one whole hour at the foot of the gibbet.

During that hour the culprit is permitted to say whatever he chooses : were he to utter high-treason against the sovereign, or inflame the people to a revolt, it would be illegal to prevent him. They think humanity requires that such an alleviation should be permitted to one who is about to be launched out of the world by a violent death. There are actually a great many men, who on this sad occasion experience a certain pleasure in communicating those sentiments with which they are affected. Lord Lovat, who after the rebellion in Scotland perished on a scaffold, made use of this privilege. He declared that George II. had no right to the crown, which belonged to the pretender alone ; and added, it was with great pleasure that he was then about to shed his blood for his lawful sovereign.

The young man whom I have just mentioned said not a word, but, trembling with fear, sat expectant of the awful period which was to put an end to his existence. The fatal moment at last arrives, and every thing is prepared ; when his accuser, turning towards Villette the chaplain of Newgate, who is obliged to accompany the criminals to Tyburn, declares in the most solemn manner that the poor young man was innocent,



and that he had been led away by the spirit of revenge to fabricate a story on purpose to procure his death. This declaration made all the spectators tremble ; but the ordinary, who was accustomed to this kind of scenes, answered coldly, that it was now too late to retract. In the mean time the people began to murmur, and some respectable persons addressed themselves to the under-sheriff, who officiated in the absence of his principal.

He having heard nothing of the confession, was about to give the fatal signal ; the conductor of the cart had his whip uplifted in the air, and the cries and prayers of the unhappy wretch were still sounding in the ears of the assistants, when all of a sudden somebody cried, Halt ! It was then represented to the under-sheriff, how barbarous it would be to allow an innocent man to perish. The emotion of this gentleman was equally great with his astonishment ; for this was a case entirely new, and without any precedent. Every body was of opinion, that this young man ought not to be executed with the others : the cruel Villette alone insisted that he could not be saved, as the laws do not give to the officer the power of suspending the execution for a quar-

ter of an hour. The sub-sheriff, who was acquainted with the laws, and fully convinced of the justice of Villette's observations, was now about to perform his duty with an aching heart. He had almost given the fatal order, when the high constable addresses him as follows: "In the name of God, sir, is it possible that you can give your consent to the death of this guiltless person?" What can I, what shall I do? replied he. "If you will delay the execution, I will instantly mount my horse and go to the king." He accordingly departs, without hearing the cruel pleasantries of the ordinary, who prognosticated that the journey would be unsuccessful.

Four other persons were joined in this sentimental embassy, who make towards Westminster in full gallop. Tyburn is distant from St. James's two English miles. They soon arrive at the palace; but the king was gone to Richmond, and all the ministers were in the country, it being then the height of summer.

They then instantly repair to the offices of the secretaries of state, hoping to find some person there of whom they could receive advice; but all the clerks shrugged up their shoulders,

saying that the officer himself ought to know the extent of those powers which the law gave him. On this they return, after an absence of an hour and a half, and relate the event of their unfortunate journey.

The execution of the other criminals had been suspended during this period, and Villette now insisted on the under-sheriff's giving the signal ; menacing him at the same time with a criminal process, and affirming that, if he did not execute the culprit, the jailor of Newgate would not receive him back after he had been delivered over to the executioner. The high-constable on the other hand asserted the contrary, and did not cease to address him with the most masculine and persuasive eloquence, until he agreed to his request. The eight other criminals were immediately hanged ; and the young man, who had fainted with excessive joy, was carried back to Newgate.

The king being informed of this event, extended his clemency that very evening to the prisoner, who, after having been conducted to the foot of the gibbet, found himself in a few hours free and happy. His Majesty also granted a pardon to the under-sheriff for having arrogated

gated a power which he did not possess, and he received the praises of the whole nation for his boldness and humanity. To him might be applied the following line from Shakespeare :

“ To do a great right, he did a little wrong.”

They have not in England a set of men who can properly be stiled executioners. The hangman is a person employed by the sheriff ; and he might gain his livelihood by any other occupation, for infamy is not there attached to his employment. It is contemptible indeed, but it is not dishonourable ; and this contempt is not attached to the action of hanging, but to the idea of its proceeding from a sordid desire of gain ; for, if he could procure no other person, the sheriff would be obliged to perform the duty himself. Of this there was an instance some years since, not indeed in London, but in the country. The two men appointed for this purpose happened to die, almost at the very moment when they were about to execute their office ; and the sheriff not being able to procure any other, nor daring to delay the day or even the hour of execution, was obliged to put the criminal to death with his own hands.

The nobility in certain cases have the privilege of being beheaded : murderers, however, such as lord Ferrers, are denied this favour. A butcher, who by his trade is best qualified for this operation, is generally employed. The family of the culprit employ him, and for this purpose commonly make him a present of a hatchet with a silver handle.

They have in Scotland a singular law in regard to criminals who will not plead to the indictment. If the prisoner obstinately persists in silence, he is not publicly executed, nor his estate confiscated, but a heavy and cruel punishment immediately follows. Of this they give him an exact detail on the last day of the session, requesting him either to declare himself guilty or to enter on his defence, and observing, that then is the time to speak, as it will afterwards be attended with no advantage. If he still continues silent, the law condemns him to the following punishment. Being conducted to a dungeon, he is stripped naked and extended on a kind of a tomb-stone, the feet being placed higher than the head. In this posture, which he is obliged constantly to retain, different parts of his body are loaded with weights of iron and stone ; he is supplied with bread  
and



and water alternately, and in such a manner that the day on which he eats he does not drink, and on that on which he drinks he is not allowed to eat. This regimen is continued till his death. After the rebellion in Scotland in the year 1745†, there were many examples of this kind: one hundred and forty-one wretches resigned themselves to this horrible species of death, to preserve their fortune to their families.

In England there are still a few of those singular laws which evince the barbarity of remote ages. For example, a husband is permitted to sell his wife, provided she gives her consent. I myself was witness to a transaction of this kind in the city of Worcester. A journeyman conducted his dear moiety to the market with a rope about her neck, as the law prescribes, and exactly in the same manner as an ox or an ass. A shoemaker, who was her lover, appeared according to appointment, and the bargain was soon made. The price of the woman was five pounds.

The laws in general are not favourable to the fair sex in England, yet notwithstanding this the women reign there with a more ab-

† The author here has been grossly misinformed.

folute dominion than in any other country. They know how to make both the men and the laws bend beneath the power of their charms, and turn to advantage those very things which are least in their favour.

As soon as the marriage is concluded, the fortune of the woman is entirely at the disposal of the husband ; but the moment that he has taken possession of it, he becomes liable to her debts, and is obliged to pay them : so that his dear wife may make him spend many an uneasy quarter of an hour. I knew a woman who, although a foreigner, knew but too well how to make a cruel use of this fatal privilege. She and her husband lived very unhappily together, and their unfortunate union became still more miserable by their continual broils. In this desperate situation she conceived the design of parting from him, and for this purpose contracted several fresh debts : that which she wished for accordingly happened ; for the poor man, being unable to pay them, was conducted to prison.

However, it is still worse to be arrested a few days after marriage, for the former debts of a wife, which in that country a husband espouses with

with her. Sensible people, therefore, take great care to make the necessary inquiries; for many women never think of marriage until they have contracted debts which become troublesome to them. The bridegroom has often been known to be conducted from the nuptial bed to a prison.

A German experienced a singular adventure of this kind. A rich widow, who at the death of her husband inherited his fortune and his debts, which were both very considerable, delayed the settlement of his affairs from day to day, till at last she was on the point of being arrested. While in this alarming situation she happened to see a young German whose figure pleased her, but whose dress seemed to announce that fortune had acted the part of a stepmother to him. In consequence of this, she resolved to make him an uncommon proposition. It was that of giving him a thousand pounds in ready money, provided he would instantly marry her; at the same time informing him, that in a few days he would be arrested for the debts which she would otherwise have been obliged to pay. He instantly closes with the proposal, to which was added the promise of an annuity of three hundred pounds a year dur-

ing his confinement, and a present of five hundred pounds sterling, on his quitting England after his release. The lady on her part engages to fulfil these conditions, and he on his to renounce all the rights of a husband.

Necessity made him agree to every thing proposed. As the law against clandestine marriages had not then taken place, my countryman espouses the widow immediately, receives the stipulated sum, is carried to the king's bench, where he remains quiet and happy, and returns to his native country, with a little fortune, after two years imprisonment.

To the end that the submission which women owe after marriage, may be the better impressed on the minds of their wives, the English have a law which condemns to a particular kind of death, any woman who is convicted of murdering her lawful husband. On these occasions they are not hanged, but burnt. However, as they are the declared enemies of every punishment that favours of cruelty, they strangle them before they reduce the bodies to ashes; but the preparation is so frightful, that it always produces the same effect as the punishment itself. This crime is however

ever very rare. The murder of a husband is regarded in England as a species of high-treason; it is accordingly denominated petty-treason.

The laws allow so much for the subjugation which a woman is supposed to be under, in respect to her husband, that, if she commits any crime in concert with him, she needs not be afraid of being punished, nor even of being tried for the offence. They say, that the duty which she owes to her husband, forces her to obey him. According to the same principle, the husband is obliged to answer for all the faults of his wife; it is he, and not her, who is prosecuted.

Among the number of regulations in that state, two may be reckoned, which, if I am not much deceived, exist nowhere but in England. No traveller has as yet made mention of them, and even very few of the English themselves know that such are in force. Would any one imagine, in a country, where the people swear every moment, and where oaths form a part of the gallantry of the sailors and the populace, that they were prohibited law? This statute was enacted at a time when



when the Puritans were at the head of affairs. As it is impossible, since bigotry has ceased to infect that island, to enforce this law in the present day, and because it would be indecent to repeal such an act, the magistrates have agreed to be indulgent to those who infringe it. They cannot however refuse to punish any person, when an informer by means of an oath convicts him of having incurred the penalty. To prevent, however, the multiplication of this sort of accusations, they have fixed the fine at the moderate rate of one shilling.

The second law is against those who treat animals with cruelty. Being always passive, it greatly redounds to the humanity of an enlightened nation, to protect dumb creatures from the barbarity of their masters. These accusations are very frequent, and no indulgence is shewn to the guilty. The pecuniary mulct is from five to ten shillings, and sometimes even more, at the discretion of the magistrate, and according to the exigence of the case. It proceeds from this that they treat animals almost as if they were reasonable creatures, and that horses and dogs experience the mild usage so much boasted of by the English.

Cock-fighting, of which I shall speak hereafter, is not liable to any punishment, and one would think that this was an exception to the former law. The two champions, however, encounter upon equal terms.

One may also place that body of people called constables, among the number of singularities with which that country abounds. It would be doing wrong to confound these with the officers of justice. They are all reputable tradesmen, having an occupation and a dwelling-house, whom the law invests with this authority, to watch over the order and security of the public. The office of constable is reckoned among the parochial employments incident to all the householders in the parish. No person can refuse to undertake it, although there is not any salary annexed to compensate for the trouble and attendance. The law fixes the duration of this charge for one year : the more opulent inhabitants generally employ a substitute, for which they pay a certain sum. The constables never arrest debtors ; a class of men called bailiffs are employed in that occupation. Neither do they risk their lives against highway robbers : the thief-takers, who are paid by government,

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and act under the controul of certain magistrates, are retained for that purpose.

To these two latter employments a certain degree of infamy is attached : the bailiffs in particular are generally hated, and woe to them, if they ever arrest any one illegally, or assume powers not allowed by law ! If a prisoner happens to escape from their hands, the people try all in their power to assist him. Their conduct towards the constables, whom they commonly esteem, is entirely different. A person taken into custody by one of them, is looked upon as a disturber of the peace of the community, and every body endeavours to secure him. The constable carries in his hand, while on duty, a staff on which the arms of England are emblazoned ; on producing of which, all the king's subjects are obliged to support him.

The lord chancellor represents, in his own person, a court armed with high authority. He is obliged, in certain cases, to temper the too great severity of the laws, and to take care that the judges are not only just, but also reasonable in their decisions. His tribunal  
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is accordingly called a court of equity. In it there are no juries: he himself is the sole judge. He is also the guardian of all the orphans in the kingdom; so that, in the discharge of this duty, he is frequently occupied about the interests of the lowest class of citizens. His court is always open, and there are not any vacations in it, as in the others: thus the famous habeas corpus act may at all times, and at all hours, be sued out in behalf of any one.

The chancellor is also speaker of the house of peers, an office which must always be filled by a man of distinguished abilities. The ministers of England are frequently employed and disgraced by means of cabals and intrigues; but it is necessary that the talents of a person elevated to that high employment should never be equivocal.

Although the party in opposition are for the most part constrained to yield to the more numerous partisans of the court, yet it often happens that they propose regulations which are acceded to, while those of the court party are rejected, because the minister does not always think it proper to shew his strength.

It is said that, when he himself does not make the proposition, he for the most part chooses to be passive, and in such a case it is no mortification to him when a bill is rejected. I was witness to an instance of this kind, which at the time it happened made some noise. The society of free-masons, which is exceedingly numerous in England, and has in the capital alone two hundred and six lodges, in the year 1771 projected a scheme in favour of their establishment, the purport of which was to build a grand general lodge in the neighbourhood of London; they also intended to augment the statutes of their order, and to give them the force of laws. In consequence of this, they presented a petition to the house of commons, praying to be allowed the privileges of a corporation. This request was delivered and seconded by members of parliament, who were at the same time free-masons and of the court party; and they lavished on this occasion, all the eloquence which a zeal for the brotherhood inspired them with.

The heads of the opposition were entirely silent, and the free-masons of Great Britain already imagined that they had effected their purpose; when one of those unquiet and discontented



contented men, so common among those islanders, got up and observed, that it would be ridiculous to grant them such great privileges before they had been fully apprised of the design, and until parliament had received an exact detail of their rules and interior regulations. This idea, which tended to discover all the mysteries of the institution, could not be complied with. The free-masons therefore withdrew their bill; and as they were not empowered to purchase any place in the name of the society, without the sanction of parliament, they were contented to build a superb edifice in the metropolis, where they now hold their assemblies †.

However ingenious the English may be in quibbling away the meaning of the laws, when they make against them, they are nevertheless always apprehensive of a direct infringement. This fear is more prevalent in the rich and powerful than among the common people: every where else it is exactly the reverse. It is, for example, uncommonly rare to see a gentleman strike an inferior, although this is usual in other countries.

† Free-masons Tavern, Queen-street.

The ministers themselves, all-powerful as they are, very seldom invade the laws, even in trifles, although there be no danger of a complaint against them. It is sufficient that an act of parliament has regulated any thing, to prevent one of them from acting in opposition to it. I myself became acquainted with many instances of this kind, in my first journey to England; and I was at that time tempted to consider as mere caprice, a punctilio founded on the most noble basis.

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## CHAPTER II.

*The Facility of procuring Credit in England—  
Bailiffs—Singular Process on being arrested—  
Bail—Fleet and King's-Bench Prisons—Laws  
and Regulations—Debtors—Acts of Grace—The  
Military obliged to submit to the Civil Power—  
General Ganfel.*

THE prisons for confining debtors in England, are such as might be expected in a nation which regards the powerful and sacred rights of humanity. They have no view of punishing debtors, by detaining them in custody : the intention is solely to keep them in a place of safety.

As it is extremely easy to contract debts in England, it must therefore necessarily follow, that the gaols are always full of prisoners. The poorest people, provided they are not common beggars,

beggars, labour with the utmost assiduity to hire a small tenement, and become *house-keepers*, because, besides the convenience resulting from it, there are certain privileges annexed to such a situation. In consequence of this, they prefer the most miserable cottage hired in their own name, to more convenient apartments in another house.

From this proceeds the great number of houses in London, which on this very account are as five to three in proportion to those of Paris, where all the inhabitants live heaped upon one another.

The national character is discovered in this very circumstance. It often happens, that a man has nothing in his little house, but a bed, a table, and some chairs ; and yet, in quality of a *house-keeper*, he procures a certain degree of credit, and no one makes any difficulty in trusting him. The butchers, the bakers, the taylor, the shoe-makers, &c. &c. furnish him with whatever he may stand in need of, without requiring ready money ; people in good circumstances generally make them wait till Christmas : a shorter time is however fixed for the poor ;

poor ; and whenever the debt amounts to the sum of † forty shillings, the creditor has a right to arrest the debtor.

Nothing is more easy than this. He goes to the sheriffs' office, where there is generally no other person than a clerk ; he informs him of his business, and asks for a writ. The clerk, whose duty it is to distribute these writs without making any inquiry, receives his fee, after having first made him kiss the bible, the usual manner of taking an oath in England.

The bailiffs, of whom I made mention in the preceding chapter, are afterwards employed, in virtue of their office, to arrest the debtor. The people detest these men ; and it is very natural, for they lead a lazy life, and inhabit good houses, which serve as temporary prisons. The creditor carries the writ to one of these, and gives him instructions. The bailiff conveys the prisoner to his house, where he remains for twenty-four hours : during this time, he makes use of every art, either to settle the matter or procure bail. If an accommodation does

† By a late act, no one can be arrested for any debt below the sum of ten pounds.



not take place in that time, the officer conducts him to prison: a fee however, properly applied, will often procure an indulgence for several days.

The bail which the debtor is obliged to procure, when he neither chooses to pay the debt nor go to gaol, is of no service to the creditor. After this he may settle the suit amicably. Two house-keepers are necessary, when security is to be given for the debt: if the sum is trifling, and the people are responsible, the officer is obliged to accept them. When the security does not appear to him sufficient, it is in his power to carry the prisoner to gaol, and refer the cognizance of the whole to the higher powers; who are by law obliged to accept the bail, when they swear in open court, that their property exceeds double the sum in contest, after all their debts are paid. When two house-keepers have made oath in this manner, the lord chief justice of England himself cannot refuse them, notwithstanding they may have all the outward marks of poverty. Nothing can vitiate such bail, but a proof of perjury.

It is possible to abuse the wisest laws, and this is the case here. There are wretches who  
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gain their livelihood entirely by this kind of traffic. They inhabit miserable houses in the suburbs, and all their moveables consist in a few old chairs and tables, which would not produce what would pay the expences, if they wanted to sell them. The German jews distinguish themselves in this honourable kind of traffic ; for even they, in quality of house-keepers, may be received.

The prisoners who wish to evade payment, or to procure their own liberty, purchase the services of these people, by a sum proportioned to the debt : this is generally ten pounds in the hundred.

If at the time appointed the debtor does not appear in person, the bail become fixed ; but they take care to keep out of the way, and at the first notice put their goods in a place of safety. The process ends here, unless the creditor, wishing to sacrifice another sum of money, arrests the jews, to maintain them afterwards in prison.

Let those readers who are astonished that such abuses exist, recollect that I now speak of London, a place of which it is difficult for a stranger to form any conception. It often hap-

pens that the manners, the customs, and the laws themselves, are so intimately connected with the constitution, that it is sometimes difficult to alter a part of this mighty edifice, without destroying the whole. It proceeds from this, that no remedy is applied to those glaring improprieties, which a foreigner imagines might be destroyed with such facility.

If a reform could be easily achieved, is it to be supposed that the greatest lawyers in the kingdom, such as a Thurlow and a Mansfield, would not long ere this have obviated such inconveniences in the discharge of their own duty?

Lord Mansfield has already been for many years lord chief justice of England. As a statesman he is not conspicuous, but he is an eloquent and engaging orator. Whoever listens to him in the court of king's-bench, where he presides, will imagine it is an oracle that speaks. He knows so well how to mingle wisdom and dignity together, that he appears like THEMIS herself in every cause where government is not immediately concerned. At the famous trial of lord George Gordon, this respectable magistrate entirely forgot that  
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his house had been burnt, his library destroyed, and his precious collection of manuscripts lost for ever. He behaved like a judge whose sole duty it was to interpret the laws, and act according to their decisions. He treated this madman with a moderation and a mildness without parallel, collected all the proofs of his innocence, and gave a charge in his favour.

I was witness to a singular scene betwixt this nobleman and a jew who was brought before him. This rogue, in the most impudent manner, offered himself as security for the sum of three hundred pounds sterling. My lord testified some doubt concerning the fortune of the conscientious son of circumcision; but he pulling from his pocket a number of bank-notes, asked his lordship if he was acquainted with that kind of paper? The judge was silent, and the bail was admitted. It is probable that one of the rich jews who were present, had slipped the money into his hand.

By virtue of the act of *Habeas Corpus*, a debtor detained in prison may be removed, whenever he pleases, to any gaol in the kingdom. The writ costs about three pounds sterling, and the smallness of the sum induces all the great debtors

to make use of this privilege, when they are able to raise so much, and do not expect to be speedily liberated.

As there are two prisons, called the king's-bench and the fleet, which are peculiar to England, and have nothing similar to them in Europe, they usually make choice of one of these. The latter is situated in the middle of the city; the other in St. George's Fields. No traveller that I am acquainted with, has ever given a particular account of these singular and uncommon gaols. They never, indeed, have been mentioned among us but in some English romances, which are very justly rejected as so many fictions and improbabilities. So true it is, that we have only a few vague ideas of a nation concerning which we never cease to speak; which we endeavour to imitate in almost every thing, and which is so very near to us.

It may be said, that these prisons are two republics existing in the bosom of the metropolis, and entirely independent of it. The situation and the largeness of the first render it more commodious than the other. Its boundaries are marked by a wall, which contains a prodigious  
extent



extent of ground. Within its circumference, a great number of houses are built for the accommodation of the prisoners ; a garden where they may walk, a place where they may play at fives, public houses where beer and wine are sold, a coffee-house, shops, &c. &c.

All the mechanics who follow trades which do not require much room nor long preparation, are allowed here to exercise their respective avocations, which they denote by signs at their doors and windows. You may find tailors, shoe-makers, wig-makers, &c. &c. who not only work for the other prisoners, but also for their customers elsewhere, who still continue to employ them. They generally make their families stay with them, and live very comfortably. Those who are at liberty sometimes surpass in number those who are confined, and the whole often amounts to two or three thousand. There is no guard but at the entrance ; the greatest liberty reigns within ; neither bars, nor bolts, nor irons, nor gaoler are to be perceived ; nothing, in one word, to denote a prison.

As their doors are never locked up, the inhabitants may divert themselves for whole nights together :

they have even been known to give balls and concerts. The free-masons have a lodge here. It was in the king's-bench that Wilkes was, in the year 1769, received as a member of that society.

The gates are open from seven o'clock in the morning till nine at night. Any person impelled either by curiosity or business, may go and come during those hours, without being asked any questions. During Wilkes's imprisonment, the avenues were continually choked up by the number of carriages that were bringing visitors to him.

It sometimes happens, that persons afraid of being arrested run to this place as to an asylum, where they remain with some of the prisoners whom they are acquainted with, and never depart till they have made terms with their creditors, or taken some other necessary steps. For, according to the constitution of this singular commonwealth, the persons who fly there for refuge, cannot in any manner be molested by those on the outside. The inside is a sanctuary, sacred to liberty, where the bailiff dares not penetrate. He never goes further than the lobby, where he deposits his prisoners. Woe to him if he passes one step beyond it !

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Some years since, one of those fellows having disguised himself, attempted to intice a widow woman towards the door, to arrest her. She had sought an asylum with her brother from the pursuit of a hard-hearted creditor, who wished to have her entirely in his power. In consequence of this, he had promised the officer a considerable sum of money in case of success. The bailiff risks the attempt, and is suspected. His retreat is cut off, and the usual signal given, on the appearance of a disturber of the peace of the society. All the inhabitants run out of their apartments, surround the unfortunate culprit, and demand the reason of his presumption. The writ which they find in his pocket explains the whole. Being unable to excuse himself, he craves forgiveness; but to prevent similar attempts for the future, they resolve to make him an example. Accordingly a most singular punishment is resolved upon. They condemn him to eat the piece of parchment which contains the writ. The wretch is obliged to obey. It is cut into small pieces, and he is forced to swallow them, one after another.

In this prison there are apartments which would not disgrace a palace. These are gene-

rally occupied by rich people, who pay for them at a very dear rate : for nothing is more common than to see persons who possess considerable fortunes conducted to this place, who remain there as long as they please, and set out whenever they choose to make the necessary arrangements with their creditors. During their confinement they squander large sums of money, and give a great deal in charity to their fellow-prisoners.

One may here see people dressed in the most fashionable clothes ; assemblies of ladies and gentlemen, apartments elegantly furnished, and tables delicately served. The genteel and polite air every where visible, will never allow any one to think that all this is in a gaol.

The streets are called after particular names, and the houses properly numbered : a chamber is thought to be very cheap, when it can be hired for half a guinea. The coffee-house is a very good building, and has a fine view of St. George's-fields : here all the newspapers are taken in.

One is almost sure of meeting good company at this place, as it is frequented by respectable

able persons, who have lost their fortunes by some unforeseen accidents.

It was here that the Rev. Mr. Horne wrote his excellent book on the government and laws of England; that Wilkes formed the plan of his present grandeur; and that lord Rodney lived for some time, before, by his exploits during the late war, he acquired the admiration of all Europe.

The unbecoming assemblage of the two sexes, is one of the greatest abuses of this prison. I have already said, that according to the laws of the country, the husband is obliged to answer for the debts of his wife, so that it is he only is arrested. One does not therefore meet with married women here, but there are plenty of widows, and unmarried ladies. These last, who are all priestesses of Venus, abound in great plenty, and sometimes exceed an hundred. One of these must be very disagreeable, if she does not find, on her arrival, several who will offer to share their apartments with her, and even their beds. When they are tired of each other they separate, and make a fresh choice. It often happens that they remain with their lovers after

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they



they are liberated ; and it is not at all uncommon to see them forming connections here, which are only dissolved by death.

The voluptuous life which they lead in this gaol, is also augmented by the continual visits which their lovers make them. However, notwithstanding the debauchery which generally prevails, it very rarely happens that it is attended with consequences punishable by the laws.

There are certain districts in the neighbourhood of the king's-bench and the fleet, called *rules*, which form a circuit of two English miles. The prisoner may not only ramble but even live within these, whenever he can find security that he will not escape. It is remarked, that no nation is so credulous as the English.

If a person wishes to have a companion in his walks, he needs only add his friend's debt to his own, and procure an indemnification for both.

There are a great many agreeable gardens in the neighbourhood of the king's-bench, where tea and coffee are sold, and which in an afternoon are full of prisoners.

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The marshal has upwards of three thousand a year, in salary and perquisites; for this he has very little to do, as he never troubles himself about the interior regulations: he is obliged, however, to give large security, as he becomes liable to the debts of all those who escape. About ten years since, four prisoners, whose debts amounted to fifteen hundred pounds sterling, escaped by means of a hole in the garden wall. Before he paid so much money, the marshal bethought himself of a very singular expedient. He gave notice that he would give them fifty per cent. of the sums for which they had been confined, provided they would surrender themselves. Three of them actually acceded to the agreement, received the stipulated payment, and returned to their former habitation.

To prevent similar attempts, they now take care to place guards around the outward wall, as several marshals have lost considerable fortunes, and fallen into the greatest poverty, by their negligence. It is absolutely necessary, considering the manner in which debtors are treated in England, that some security should be given to the creditors, without which, they would escape daily by means of corruption.

A crowd of people belonging to the prison, are always on watch at the door, which is constantly kept shut. All persons who either enter or depart from it, are obliged to pass through the room in which they wait. They examine the prisoners with the greatest minuteness on their arrival; they are not, however, permitted to visit the inside of the prison on any pretext whatever.

From what I have said, it will be readily believed, that no other place of confinement in the world, in the least resembles the king's bench: as yet, however, I have not mentioned a single word concerning those particulars which more eminently characterise its republican form of government.

Although the care of this gaol is entirely confided to the marshal, yet he is not permitted to interfere in its internal regulations, and is very seldom seen within its walls. Every prisoner, whether man or woman, is a member of this commonwealth, and participates in all its privileges. They choose a lord chief justice, and a certain number of judges, who assemble once a week, and decide controversies.

In this court they terminate all quarrels, make laws concerning the police, hear all complaints, and pronounce final judgment : in a word, every thing is equally attended to as in a well governed community. Every one has a right to attend and plead his own cause. Those who are not able to express themselves with propriety in public, such as women, for example, employ others to relate their complaints, or defend their interests.

These proceedings may appear laughable to my readers ; they are not, however, so to those who incur the displeasure of the judges. No monarch in the world can ever flatter himself to see his laws obeyed with such punctuality, as are the rules of this society. The most severe equity dictates the decrees, which are put in execution without a moment's delay. A colonel on half pay, who possessed great eloquence and abilities, for many years presided in this court, which he governed with the greatest propriety and decorum.

When there is a suit commenced on account of a debt contracted in the prison, the action is brought in all the proper forms. The debtor is summoned to appear, and is obliged to obey ;  
for

for in case of refusal, he is dragged by force. Twelve jurymen being impannelled, as in the national courts, they give a verdict, after having made the necessary inquiries; and from this there is no appeal. If time is requested, it is allowed; if the debtor at its expiration still wishes to procrastinate, all his goods, even to his bed, are then sold for the benefit of the creditor. If he has no effects, his apartment is let out, till either his creditor is satisfied, or he finds some other way of discharging the obligation.

Even criminal processes, such as larceny, and breach of the peace, are here taken cognizance of. On such occasions, the culprit, with a paper stuck to his breast describing his crime, is obliged to walk through every street, preceded by a herald, who with a loud voice assigns the reason of the punishment, and tells the inhabitants to beware of the delinquent. This inspires every one with hatred to the crime; and as the criminal cannot escape out of the narrow circle in which he may be said to vegetate, rather than to live, it happens very rarely that any one exposes himself to a humiliation so terrible in its consequences. It may therefore be said with truth, that the laws of this petty republic, and the punishments which they inflict, fully attain the end proposed.

The



The community also appoint and pay watchmen, who, according to the custom in all great towns, cry the hours during the night, and prevent fires and robberies : their occupation in the day-time is to proclaim the new laws and regulations, and, in one word, to instruct the inhabitants in every thing that it is necessary for them to know.

The families, the friends, and the domestics, of the prisoners, who settle among them, and all those who pass a single night within the walls, are under the protection of the society, and, in case of being maltreated, are entitled to receive ample and immediate satisfaction : if they, on the other hand, happen to offend themselves, they are immediately turned out of the prison, and are never more permitted to enter it.

In cases of importance, the person aggrieved may cite another before the common court of justice ; and if they are destitute of money, their fellow-prisoners make a subscription to defray the expences.

According to the laws of England, a prisoner may commence a process on account of debt, without any expence : on depositing a few farthings in the poor's box, a counsel is appointed to him gratis. This is called suing in *forma pauperis*. If he

He loses his cause, the costs are added to the debt. The expences incurred in the court of king's-bench, by a process not very intricate, amount generally to about thirty pounds; in the marshalsea to five, or six. The debt must always exceed ten pounds sterling, before a process can be instituted in the former court for its recovery.

I know not whether the privileges of this place are sanctioned by any law; they are however tolerated by the legislative power, and that, perhaps, as a compensation for the loss of liberty. But without attending to these considerations, the conduct of government in this case is extremely wise. What disorders, what complaints, what profligacies of every kind, would not ensue among so many prisoners, if a well regulated police did not remedy all these inconveniencies, by establishing order and harmony among them!

Without this, they would be obliged to use the methods practised in France, where they treat debtors like so many criminals; crowd them in horrible dungeons, punish them by whipping, without distinction of age, rank or sex; and thus tormented by their equals, devoured by hunger, and eat up with vermin, leave the poor wretches to curse their existence!

What

What a contrast is here betwixt the two nations ! nevertheless the French are not ashamed to treat the English as a cruel and savage people ; and I am sorry to add, that some of my own \* countrymen have not blushed to retail such absurdities, and judge of a whole nation by the misbehaviour of the populace.

There is a great number of shop-keepers established in the king's-bench prison, who trade in prohibited goods, which they sell at a very low price. Among other things they retail tea, coffee, brandy, soap, and candles, which they procure in large quantities ; and as they are not subject to the visits of excisemen, they not only supply the prisoners but others publicly. This abuse is not to be reckoned among the number of those tolerated by the government : it took its rise under an indolent minister, and no one has since attempted to reform it.

Those debtors who claim a maintenance, are obliged to present themselves before one of the courts of justice, and swear to their poverty ; after which, the creditor is obliged to furnish them with the sum assigned by law.

\* The Germans.

This allowance is in consequence of a very ancient custom, and amounts to four pence per day. Very few of the debtors have recourse to this, because the oath which they are obliged to take, wounds their pride, and the supply itself is but trifling.

It is necessary, while on this subject, to remark a very singular custom. The payment of this allowance must be made every Saturday, for the following week. If the creditor is not punctual, which may often happen when he lives at the distance of a league from the king's-bench, the prisoner is enlarged, and the debt cancelled. On this occasion, all that is necessary to be done, is to prove that the stipulated sum has not been regularly paid.

An insolvent act frequently opens all the gaols in the kingdom, and then almost all the prisoners are released. I say *almost all*, because there are a few excepted from the benefit of it; those, for example, who owe five hundred pounds and upwards to any one person. With some, there is a kind of infamy attached to it, which prevents them: there are others who have a great deal of money, and consequently cannot become insolvent; and many are so satisfied with the advantages arising from smuggling, that they never wish to be released.

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The names of all the debtors who choose to clear themselves by means of the act, are printed in the Gazette ; and before they receive their liberty, they are obliged to swear in the presence of a magistrate, that they are unable to satisfy their creditors.

The English do not reckon imprisonment disgraceful ; it is however thought a great reproach *to be cleared by an act*. On these occasions, they are always asked if they can give any security to their creditor ? When this question was put to the unfortunate king Theodore, who was actually released in this manner, he answered, *Yes, the kingdom of Corsica*.

As it is expressed in the bill, that all insolvent debtors who appear by a certain day shall be entitled to the benefits of it ; on those occasions, you may see people arriving from the most distant parts of Europe, to acquit themselves of the debts which they have contracted in England. Not only the natives, but foreigners of every nation, profit by the opportunity. Tenducci, the famous Italian singer, who owed more than ten thousand pounds sterling, returned to England, in the year 1777, for this purpose. He afterwards was engaged at Drury-Lane theatre, and ran away the very next year, after  
having



having incurred several thousand pounds of fresh debts.

All the prisons in England would not be able to contain the prodigious number of debtors, both English and foreigners, who surrender themselves at such times. In consequence of this, they have adopted a singular practice, for the accommodation of those who have been some time in confinement, as well as those newly arrived. These latter are not received within the walls of the gaols, but are allowed to be at liberty, and live wherever they please. To entitle themselves to this privilege, they are shut up for a few moments within the prison : after this, they give an *undertaking* to appear whenever they are called upon, which they would be sure to forget, were they afraid of the consequences.

As the military are wholly subordinate to the civil power, and as an officer has no right to punish a soldier for any thing but the neglect of his duty, it is not at all uncommon to find many of them confined in all the gaols of the kingdom, on account of debt, or a criminal prosecution. A foreigner, and especially a German, who has been used to behold the army, on every occasion, treated as a body altogether separate and distinct from the people, is extremely

tremely astonished at this custom. I have seen a bailiff arrest an officer on the parade, and carry him off. It is not to the colonel, but to a justice of the peace, that one complains against a soldier; it is a soldier alone who carries his complaints to the commanding officer, who, when the offence is not trivial, does not think himself competent to decide upon it, but is obliged to refer it to the civil tribunal.

An old soldier, who had served on the continent during the war of seven years, where he had learned a great many military tricks, some years after the peace, while a centinel in the park, happening to take off a man's hat who was satisfying some of his natural wants, soon found that this German custom was not tolerated in England. The man immediately applied to a magistrate, swore that the soldier had stole his hat, and obtained a warrant. The thief was accordingly seized, imprisoned, tried, condemned, and would have been actually executed, if the king had not granted him a pardon.

No debtor can be arrested on a Sunday; from twelve o'clock on Saturday night, till the same hour on Sunday evening, he is in perfect freedom. During that day, he may go wherever he pleases, even  
 2 among

among his creditors, who have been looking for him in vain during the rest of the week.

Those who have been security for any man, may, however, arrest him on a Sunday : nay, even in a church, when he refuses to surrender ; and neither any new process, nor fresh bail, can take him out of their hands. This privilege is the more just, as not one in the whole world has greater confidence than an Englishman, or is more easily induced to answer even for a stranger, when the sum is not very great, notwithstanding he derives no advantage from his kindness. It therefore happens, that *running away* from bail, is looked upon among them as the most infamous of all actions.

It is necessary that the sheriff's officer should employ the utmost precaution in seizing a debtor. A writ is only valid in certain districts, and beyond these they cannot go, without suing out another : for example, the city of London, and the counties of Middlesex and Surry, have each a particular jurisdiction.

There is a certain part of Westminster, in the neighbourhood of the Park, where bailiffs dare not go, and where the debtors may remain in safety. This precinct, which includes St. James's, the  
Green

Green and Hyde Parks, is called the verge of the court, and is under the regulation of the board of green cloth. Before permission is granted to arrest a person resident there, he always receives twenty-four hours notice. All the houses are full of lodgers, and apartments let for more money than any where else in London.

The proverb, that an *Englishman's house is his castle*, is not without foundation; for no one can be arrested in his own house, on account of debt. However, if the bailiff, happening to find the street-door open, gets to the master of it and shews his writ, he is obliged instantly to follow him. There is no kind of tricks which they do not practise, for this purpose. They dress themselves sometimes as men of condition, at other times like women, and on some occasions they wear a livery.

They are not allowed to open the street-door; but it is not at all uncommon to see them pass the bounds prescribed by law, hoping in general, that the debtors have not money enough to institute an action against them.

They are, however, sometimes deceived. It is now about twenty years ago, that general Gansel commenced a process on this account. That gentleman

man had not a house of his own, but hired a first floor in which he lived. As he owed a large sum of money, his creditors wished to seize him. The bailiffs, in consequence of this, having unlocked the outward door, made towards the general's apartments, who wounded one of them with a pistol from the inside; but, being obliged to yield to numbers, he was dragged to prison, and there commenced an action against them.

All England was attentive to the decision on the question, whether a lodger enjoyed the same rights as the owner of a house. The twelve judges, to the great satisfaction of the whole nation, decided in the affirmative. In consequence of this, the sheriff's officers were immediately conducted to gaol, and the general, who was greatly in debt, was removed to the fleet, where he died a prisoner some years afterwards.



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### CHAPTER III.

*The Police of London—Highwaymen and Footpads—  
House-breakers—Anecdote—Thieves—Women of  
the Town—Seduction—Bagnios—Singular Excess  
—Unnatural Crimes held in great Abhorrence.*

**T**HE English have not a single word in their whole language, to express what we term the *police* ; if one however concludes from thence, that the thing itself does not exist among them, he will be grossly deceived. Foreigners more especially, who cannot separate the idea of London from that of the highwaymen, who infest the great roads in its neighbourhood, imagine that it is the worst regulated metropolis in the world.

London is nevertheless as well governed as any city can be, which contains such an amazing number of men, who enjoy the most uninterrupted liberty. The human soul can never be more ele-

vated than when a philosophical mind surveys this million of men crowded together, whom neither the soldiery nor the sceptre of despotism, but the invisible power of the laws preserves in unity, by infusing the order and harmony necessary for the regulation of such a gigantic body. If the wealth of this great city, the voluptuousness of every kind with which it abounds, and the luxury of the present age are considered, ought we not rather to be astonished that this prodigious mass does not, by continual friction, sometimes emit the most dangerous scintillations?

It appears to me wonderful, that the crowds of poor wretches who continually fill the streets of the metropolis, excited by the luxurious and effeminate life of the great, have not some time or another entered into a general conspiracy to plunder them.

The thefts and rogueries practised there, considering every thing, are but few in number. A wise precaution might still diminish the evil; for it is not possible that human wisdom should be able totally to destroy it; while the metropolis is so extensive, while it remains without walls, and without gates, and while the kingdom preserves its present constitution.

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I shall here give some account of its present police. The poor, in every parish, are maintained out of a certain provision to which every house-keeper is obliged to contribute.

A great number of hospitals, which are the *ne plus ultra* of that kind of establishments, by their order, their arrangement, and their cleanliness, are open to the sick of all nations and religions, whom they entertain by means of annual subscriptions.

The streets are most excellently lighted every evening, towards the dusk, without having any regard to the moon, which is often obscured by clouds, although it is often ridiculously allowed for in the economical calculations in other countries. These lamps are placed for six or even seven miles along the great roads, on purpose to light the passengers. You also meet with a watch-box, at the end of every hundred yards, containing a man, provided with a gun and bayonet, who, by means of a bell, gives an alarm at the approach of any suspicious person. There are in London itself two thousand watchmen, each armed with a long pole, and carrying a rattle, with which they assemble their companions, at the appearance of any tumult. When they find either doors or windows open, they in-

form the proprietors ; they also cry the hours, tell the weather, and give notice of fires.

The precautions which are taken in respect to conflagrations, those horrible scourges of the human race, are also very wise. At the first notice of a fire, you perceive a multitude of men, running from all quarters, with the engines which are entrusted to their care. For the first of these brought to the spot, they receive a recompense of five guineas, the second is entitled to three, and the third to one. The others are not paid any thing ; however, the hope of gaining one of the three premiums, makes them use the utmost industry and dispatch.

All the houses and furniture are insured. Every street, whether large or small, courts, alleys, &c. have their names painted at each corner. All the doors are numbered, and, besides this, generally have the names of the owners engraven on brass plates. Every house in that immense city is provided with water by means of pipes which are carried under ground. The pavement, which is of the best kind, is rendered still more excellent, by the great care that is taken of it ; one is also astonished at the neatness of the streets, and the great attention to prevent the accumulation of dirt.

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The hackney-coaches, of which a certain number is assigned to every quarter of the metropolis, are ready at a moment's notice, during the whole day, and dare not, on any pretence whatever, refuse to carry passengers wherever they please, either in town, or within a certain distance from it. The number is painted on two tin plates affixed to the doors ; if it is ever taken off, the proprietor is fined. The hire of these carriages is regulated according to the time and the distance ; and if the coachman takes more than his fare, he is liable to be severely punished.

It is the same in respect to the wherries that ply on the river, which are not only numbered, but also have the names and places of abode of the watermen painted on the inside. When any complaints are made against the boatmen, an immediate decision may be expected.

The justices sit during the whole day ; if any pressing business should oblige one of them to be absent, another may be found at every hundred yards. The aldermen of the city attend Guildhall in rotation, hear all disputes, and settle petty differences on the spot ; this is all done gratis, and in open court : the judges, therefore, can neither be



corrupt nor unjust. The lord mayor also sits daily at the Mansion-house.

After this description, it will be easy to decide, whether London is well governed or not. The French and their partisans will determine in the negative, because it is not the custom there, to imprison and maltreat twenty innocent people; to deter one that is guilty.

The laws are peculiarly severe against highwaymen, whose guilt, when fully proved, is punished with death. To prevent them from forming associations, they very wisely allow a culprit to escape, on accusing and convicting his companions. This advantage, which those rogues often make use of, inspires them with distrust, and prevents them from uniting in associations, which would be exceedingly dangerous. The magistrates also often entrap them, by means of the thief takers, who disguise themselves, and travel in a post-chaise, along the most dangerous roads in the neighbourhood of town. These fire their pistols the moment that they are attacked, jump out of the carriage, and are often lucky enough to seize their prey. The highwaymen principally trust for their escape in the speed of their horses, and their knowledge of the bye-roads. This class of men  
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are generally very polite, they assure you *they are very sorry that poverty has driven them to that shameful recourse*, and end by demanding your purse, in the most courteous manner. They often restore to those, who in their fright have given all their money, a trifle to continue their journey. Some of them converse with the utmost phlegm, and ride off without any ceremony. Some, besides the cash, take also the watch; others refuse it, well knowing that it often leads to a discovery.

Those who are too poor to procure a horse, commit robberies in the streets. The town is their place of action, as the country is that of the highwayman's.

If one does not travel either very early or very late, there is no fear of being attacked even in the most suspicious places; and on such occasions, a person or two on horseback will prevent any danger. The nobility, and all people in affluent circumstances, are generally attended by servants well armed, and are never stopped, but when they have omitted this slight precaution. The highwaymen are not in the least dangerous, as they never proceed farther than a *menace*, never making use of their pistols, but in case of resistance. On

this account, no person is imprudent enough to attempt defending himself, or he might easily do so in a close carriage, against a man on horseback. I never used to carry fire-arms, when it was my fortune to travel in the neighbourhood of town, at any critical hour, being contented with taking the necessary precaution, in respect to my money. This consisted in dividing it, and putting in a purse the part which I destined for the collectors ; for as prudence will not allow them to stop long, they are in a hurry to depart with their spoil, without stopping to examine it. Among the English, indeed, the prize is never very great, for they think it inconvenient to carry much ready money. You will never see among them a heavy purse, because they think that it looks as if they boasted of their wealth, or might be suspected of some design in shewing it : those who are attached to ancient customs, never carry one at all, but keep their money loose in their pockets.

The trade of a thief is divided into different classes, each having its particular maxims, customs, and denomination. The poorer sort, who stop passengers in the streets and neighbourhood of London, during the night, are called *foot-pads* ; those who are mounted on horseback, and attack travellers in the high-roads, are called *highway-men* ;

*men* ; and those who, by flight of hand, find means to get into apartments, and commit depredations, are called *house-breakers*. The *pick pockets* are different from all these, and are the most poor and despicable of any, unless they are very eminent in their art, and reserve themselves for great attempts alone.

These different kinds of thieves remain faithful to their particular tenets. A highwayman will never condescend to become a pick-pocket : he would think himself dishonoured, in attempting to empty any one's pockets, by a low trick. Of such a *falling off* there are hardly any examples. I have seen one of those thieves, who escaped the punishment inflicted by law, on account of turning *king's evidence*, so much despise the idea of *filching*, that he would not take a handkerchief, part of which happened to be out of a gentleman's pocket, and which he might have easily snatched, without being perceived : on the contrary, he warned him of the circumstance, and desired him to conceal it.

I pass on to the other species of rogues, who, notwithstanding the multitude of watchmen employed every where in the metropolis, steal out from their wretched apartments, and plunder

houses in the night time. These break open the shutters, force the windows, or saw the iron bars, with the greatest dexterity, and little or no noise. If they are surprised by the watch, or perceive that the inhabitants are alarmed, they immediately throw their tools away, and take to their heels. They melt down silver plate, for fear of being discovered by the cypher or the arms, and are acquainted with people who purchase it in ingots, and buy from them all their booty. As these, who are termed *receivers*, encourage theft, by this kind of traffic, they are doubly punished, and find it impossible, notwithstanding their wealth, to escape from the hands of justice. They used formerly to be transported for fourteen years, to America, while thieves were only banished for seven. This has been lately changed into imprisonment: the same proportion is however still observed.

It very often happens, that women, on whom Nature seems to have been prodigal of her favours, league with these wretches. They act as spies during the day, and at night disguise themselves, and assist in profiting by the discoveries which they have made. By frequently visiting the courts of justice, I have had occasion to hear very singular transactions of this kind. I one day, at the Old-Bailey, saw a young woman, fair as Venus, present



sent herself before the astonished judges and spectators. Her dress was in the most elegant taste, and she captivated every heart, by those graces, and that air of dignity, which she displayed during her defence.

This ravishing creature, happening to be very much attached to a young man, who belonged to a gang of thieves, had been so imprudent as to join them. She had assisted at one of their nocturnal expeditions, and helped to carry away the plunder. The house where they committed the depredations stood by itself, and the owner being in the country, nobody was in it. As they had not waited for the night, but simply till it was dusk, the robbery was hardly accomplished, when an alarm was given, and the thieves were pursued. Although the fair accomplice had taken the precaution to throw away every thing in her flight, yet she was obstinately followed to a house, into which having run, she immediately shut the door.—But how did she appear to those who pursued her? Represent to your imagination an old beggar-woman, covered with dirty rags, her face blackened, her hair dishevelled, and, in one word, the most hideous figure in the world : such was the appearance of this handsome female, when she saved herself from the fury of the populace.

The mistress of the house was a widow, of an unsuspected reputation, who lived economically on a little income, which she however knew how to increase, by a thousand stratagems. In this critical moment she acted her part admirably ; for, as she refused to let any body enter until a constable was brought, she had sufficient time for preparation.

On hearing that a thief had taken refuge in her house, she pretended the greatest fear and astonishment. Her officious neighbours helped to search every corner after this frightful creature, which some of them had seen enter ; they found nobody, however, but a beautiful young woman, in an elegant undress, sewing in the best apartment, whom the landlady, on entering, called her relation. She took particular care to search in every part of the room where she sat, and then retired, after making many apologies to her handsome cousin ; so that, after an ineffectual search, the crowd departed without the least suspicion. However, a few days after, some of the gang being seized, information was given against the young woman, and she was involved in the prosecution. Her charms, and her no less bewitching eloquence, made a great impression on the minds of the judges and the spectators, but the inexorable law felt

felt no compassion, and she was condemned to four years imprisonment.

The pick-pockets, as I have already observed, form a class entirely apart. It is by trick and stratagem, and not by force, that they attain their ends ; therefore they never have occasion for arms. They do not unite in bodies, each person acts for himself ; and they immediately convert every thing they acquire into ready money.

There are some of them, who, by means of fashionable clothes, insinuate themselves into the first company, and their impudence is often crowned with success. A fellow of this kind, called Barrington, renowned in London, on account of his great dexterity, elegant manners, and a boldness unparalleled, still carries on his trade with great reputation \*. Some years since, having slipped into the stage box at Drury-Lane Theatre, he found means to steal from Prince Orlow a gold snuff-box, adorned with the Empress of Russia's picture, set round with brilliants. His highness having perceived the theft, requested that the culprit might be immediately punished ; but when he was informed, that it was necessary that he himself

\* He is at present in Newgate.

should

should appear in person, he stifled his resentment, and the offender was released.

Nothing is more astonishing than the fidelity, I may even say the probity of these wretches, in regard to one another: this appears in the mutual dangers that they run, the fair divisions that they make of the spoil, and, in fine, is perceptible through their whole behaviour. This phenomenon fully justifies the English proverb, that, *there is honour among thieves*.

This shameful trade has been, if I may be allowed the expression, immortalized by Gay, in his Beggar's Opera, which is such a favourite with the public, that it is represented in London, at least thirty times a year. In this dramatic entertainment, you may see a band of thieves, with pistols in their hands, celebrating their revels, and singing songs in honour of their profession. Of course, much may be said against the morality of such an entertainment; but it is lucrative to the theatre, on account of the witty sallies with which it abounds, its singularity, and the excellence of its music.

All the justices of the peace for the county of Middlesex besought Garrick, in the year 1771, to stop the performance; but the English Roscius did

not choose to deprive himself of a piece, which seemed to be a mine of wealth.

Criminals are never-carried to the King's-Bench or the Fleet, which are destined entirely for the confinement of debtors, but to other prisons, of which Newgate is the principal. They are there put in irons, but, except this, which prudence evidently dictates, are never maltreated. Their friends may visit them, and are generally allowed to give them any relief, to alleviate their unhappy situation, There is however a great difference between their dungeons, and the places where debtors are enclosed, who can scarce indeed be considered as prisoners.

At an execution, the thieves, that they may see their companions die, always press as close as possible to the place of punishment: the spectators, however, have never more occasion to look to their pockets than at that moment. A remark of a highwayman, in which there is some pleasantry, is often quoted. An acquaintance of his being carried to Tyburn, after having gravely surveyed the gallows, and all the preparations for his fate, exclaimed, "*O, what an excellent trade would ours be, if this d—n'd machine was out of the way!*" "*Fool!*" replies the other, "*this gibbet, which you curse, is*  
"*the*



*“ the best support of our trade, for, were it not for  
 “ it, every pick-pocket would turn highwayman.”*

*Cheats* ought to be mentioned entirely by themselves. They never steal, but employ all the stratagems that can be devised, to *trick* people out of their property, and convert the wealth of others to their own use. Half of their business is to be well acquainted with the laws, for they always take care to carry their projects just short of that point where the magistrate would interfere. They associate together, hire noble houses, furnish them with magnificent furniture, and keep the most showy carriages. The valet de chambre and the footmen are all in the secret, and share the earnings of their employer. Sometimes the master puts on a livery, to quiet a clamorous creditor, who, duped with the brilliant appearance, has left his goods, without ever having seen the owner of the mansion.

Concerning this subject, I could relate a thousand anecdotes, of a very uncommon kind, which I heard during my stay in London ; but as these agree so little with the manners and customs of all the other countries in Europe, they would be accounted so many fables.

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I am now arrived at a subject unfortunately inexhaustible, I mean the *women of the town*. It is well known how handsome the English ladies are, and I am sorry to add, that the greatest part of this class of women abuse, in the most shameful manner, the charms with which nature has so prodigally endowed them. London is said to contain fifty thousand prostitutes, without reckoning kept-mistresses. The most wretched of these live with *matrons*, who lodge, board, and clothe them. The dress worn by the very lowest of them is silk, according to the custom which luxury has generally introduced into England. Sometimes they escape from their prison, with their little wardrobes under their arms, and trade on their *own bottoms*, when, if they are unfortunate, or happen not to be economical, they are soon dragged to gaol by their creditors.

The uncertainty of receiving payment makes the house-keepers charge them double the common price for their lodgings. They hire by the week a first floor, and pay for it more than the owner gives for the whole premises, taxes included. Without these, thousands of houses would be empty, in the western parts of the town. In the parish of Mary-le-bone only, which is the largest and best peopled in the capital, thirty thousand ladies

ladies of pleasure reside, of whom seventeen hundred are reckoned to be house-keepers. These live very well, and without ever being disturbed by the magistrates. They are indeed so much their own mistresses, that if a justice of the peace attempted to trouble them in their apartments, they might turn him out of doors; for as they pay the same taxes as the other parishioners, they are consequently entitled to the same privileges.

Their apartments are elegantly, and sometimes magnificently furnished; they keep several servants, and some have their own carriages. Many of them have annuities paid them by their seducers, and others settlements into which they have surprised their lovers in the moment of intoxication. The testimony of these women, even of the lowest of them, is always received as evidence in the courts of justice. All this generally gives them a certain dignity of conduct, which can scarcely be reconciled with their profession.

The higher classes of these females are uncommonly honest; you may entrust them with a purse crammed with gold, without running any risk whatever. They can never be prevailed upon to grant favours to the lover of one of their companions, even if they are sure that the circumstance will

will be kept a profound secret. One of my friends made a proposal of this kind, and was refused ; he redoubled his presents and his careffes, but in vain : “ I am, sir,” says she, “ an unhappy female, obliged to live by this dishonourable profession ; “ and Heaven is my witness, that I am in want of “ money ; but I will never consent to have any “ connection with the acquaintance of my friend. “ If you were an Englishman, I might not be so “ difficult ; but as you are a foreigner, I cannot. “ What opinion would you have of us, if I were “ to gratify your wishes ?” Not satisfied with the excuse, he ridiculed her delicacy, and tempted her with more money ; but, notwithstanding her poverty, she persisted in her refusal, and all this from national pride.

During the elections for members of parliament, it is not unusual to see these ladies refuse to barter their favours for large sums of money, and reserve their charms for the purchase of votes, in favour of certain patriots, whom they esteem.

Such virtues greatly lessen the infamy of their profession. I have seen many people of rank walk with them in public, and allow them to take hold of their arms, in the most familiar manner. I have  
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even beheld more than one minister plenipotentiary conversing publicly at Vauxhall, with females of this description. Although their rank requires a decorum, which would be unnecessary among the English nobility; yet these gentlemen easily accede to the customs of a country, when they are in favour of liberty.

One of these ladies, called Kitty Fisher, was very celebrated, about twenty-five years since, on account of the elegance and delicacy with which she sacrificed to Venus. She was indebted to nature for an uncommon portion of beauty, judgment, and wit, joined to a most agreeable and captivating vivacity. The union of so many perfections procured the esteem, and fascinated the desires of those who prefer Cyprian delights to all the other pleasures of life. This lady knew her own merit; she demanded a hundred guineas a night, for the use of her charms, and she was never without votaries, to whom the offering did not seem too exorbitant. Among these was the late Duke of York, brother to the king; who one morning left fifty pounds on her toilet. This present so much offended Miss Fisher, that she declared that her doors should ever be shut against him in future; and to shew, by the most convincing proofs, now much she despised his



his present, she clapt the bank-note between two slices of bread and butter, and ate it for her breakfast.

The idea of the pleasures to be enjoyed in the capital inspires the girls in the country with the most longing desire to participate in them. Imagination inflames their little heads, and presents every object under an exaggerated appearance. The young people of both sexes, who have been educated at a distance from town, imagine the metropolis to resemble that paradise promised to the Mahometans, by their great prophet. Is it to be then wondered at, that they form so many little projects to abandon their homes, and reside in the center of pleasure ? Or that a maiden, without experience, should be easily deceived, when the proposition comes from a lover ?

When an amorous couple have no hopes of getting their parents' consent to their union, they foolishly think that they are obliged to run away, and they accordingly make for London. This fatal elopement raises the indignation of the young woman's relations, who are deaf to her prayers, and the young man becoming more pressing every day, she yields to his desires, in the hope of being more happy. The ungrateful lover, after being satiated with

with her charms, abandons her : thus left without any help, alone, unknown, she remains in the midst of an immense city, where trick and intrigue every day produce the most atrocious and singular scenes.

Some severe cenfor may here say, that in this deplorable situation she might take the high road, and beg her way to her father's house, or, having received some education, she might get into service. These two resources are impossible in England. The amiable professor Moritz has already proved, by his own example, that journies on foot are entirely impracticable in that island. But if they were, could a young and beautiful creature venture to travel by herself ? In the second place, who would employ a person, whose character could not be ascertained, and who has no one to speak in her behalf ? And if she were willing, and fortunate enough to overcome so many disadvantages, would she be permitted ? Her hostess, her creditors, the true or sham officers of justice ; the most infernal schemes, and most scandalous practices, are employed against the poor wretch, till, yielding to necessity, she is constrained to consent to whatever is required of her.

One need not be astonished, after this, to hear  
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that there are so many unfortunate women, who often possess all the virtues, and all the good qualities, which we admire and cherish in their sex; youth, beauty, mildness, education, principle; and even that delicate coyness, which is the most powerful attraction to love. The ladies of pleasure in London actually give us an idea of the celebrated Grecian courtesans, who charmed the heroes of Athens, and whom the sage Socrates himself often honoured with his visits.

Let it be recollected, however, that I now speak only of a few, for it is very uncommon, not to say impossible, to find such precious qualities, among those vile prostitutes, whose kind of life stifles in their breasts every seed of virtue, if any indeed ever existed therein. At all seasons of the year, they sally out towards the dusk, arrayed in the most gaudy colours, and fill the principal streets. They accost the passengers, and offer to accompany them: they even surround them in crowds, stop and overwhelm them with caresses and entreaties. The better kind, however, content themselves with walking about, till they themselves are addressed. Many married women, who live in the distant parts of the town, prostitute themselves

selves in Westminster, where they are unknown. I have beheld with a surprise, mingled with terror, girls from eight to nine years old make a proffer of their charms; and such is the corruption of the human heart, that even they have their lovers. Towards midnight, when the young women have disappeared, and the streets become deserted, then the old wretches, of fifty or sixty years of age, descend from their garrets, and attack the intoxicated passengers, who are often prevailed upon to satisfy their passions in the open street, with these female monsters.

Besides the immense number of women, who live in ready-furnished apartments, there are many noted houses, situated in the neighbourhood of St. James's, where a great number are kept for people of fashion. A little street called *King's Place* is inhabited by nuns of this order alone, who live under the direction of several rich abbesses. You may see them superbly clothed at public places; and even those of the most expensive kind. Each of these convents has a carriage and servants in livery; for the ladies never deign to walk anywhere, but in the park. They pay for their lodgings

lodgings and their board, and are entirely on the footing of *pensioners*, being governed by the rules of the house.

The admission into these temples is so exorbitant, that the mob are entirely excluded : there are, indeed, only a few rich people who can aspire to the favours of such venal divinities. The celebrated Fox used to frequent these places often before he became a minister ; and even afterwards, drunk, as it were, with the pleasures which he had enjoyed, he went from thence to move, astonish, and direct the House of Commons, by means of his manly and convincing eloquence. It is very singular, that this man, while he sacrificed to Venus, and participated so often in her orgies, was always regulated by the maxims of an unimpeachable probity, and true patriotism : the moment, however, that he devoted himself entirely to the study of politics, he stifled the spirit of libertinism, and with it these two virtues.

There is in London a species of houses called BAGNIOS, the sole intention of which is to procure pleasure. These are magnificent buildings, and the furniture contained in them is



not unworthy of the palace of a prince. They there procure every thing that can enrapture the senses. They do not, indeed, keep women, but they are instantly brought in chairs; and only those who are celebrated for their fashion, their elegance, and their charms, have the honour of being admitted. The English preserve their national phlegm in the midst of their very pleasures. It is impossible to form an idea of the gravity with which every thing is conducted even in these houses. Noise and riot are banished; the domestics speak in a whisper; and old men, and debauched youths, put every scheme in practice to restore the proper tone to their nerves, which have been weakened by too much enjoyment.

This kind of entertainment is very expensive, and yet sometimes the bagnios are full all night long. For the most part, they are situated within a few paces of the theatres, or are surrounded by taverns. The profusion of wealth wasted in them, occasioned Beaumarchais, who was not unacquainted with the luxuries of Paris, to affirm, "That more money is exhausted during one night in the taverns and bagnios of London, than would maintain  
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all the SEVEN UNITED PROVINCES for six months."

A young gentleman, a native of Hampshire, whose father never would give him permission to visit London, had scarce buried the old gentleman, and become master of his own person, and a fortune of forty thousand pounds sterling, when he set out for town. His passion for debauchery was so very great, that, instead of alighting at an inn, he went directly to a bagnio, and there demanded a lodging. They had never been asked for this before; but his inexperience, and his wealth, made them agree to every thing; and they immediately began to project plans, which he was eager to execute. Continually surrounded by sharpers, and women of the town; intoxicated with music, love, and wine, days and nights imperceptibly glided on, and followed each other without being perceived. The scarcest wines were drunk by them, in the utmost profusion; they even made baths for their feet with champaign. For eleven days this luxurious young maniac led this kind of life; when he thought proper, at length, to make his arrival known to one of his friends. This gentleman's surprise was extreme: he, however, im-

mediately repaired to the inconsiderate youth, and painted the dangers and the disagreeable consequences of this kind of life in such lively colours, that he consented to depart immediately. It was, however, first necessary that the bill should be settled: the host demanded for these eleven days of wild debauchery, no less than twelve hundred guineas. The new MENTOR however resisted the charge with indignation: the young man was arrested, bail was given; and, to punish the perfidious address with which he had attempted to ruin an inexperienced lad, a court of justice reduced the demand to a mere trifle.

Were this abuse, the natural consequence of luxury and superabundance, attempted to be reformed, such a reformation, in a country like England, would be attended with the most pernicious consequences to trade and commerce. If they were to establish a tribunal of chastity in London, as was formerly done at Vienna, that great city would soon be depopulated; the melancholy of the English would become intolerable; the fine arts would be frightened away; one half of the inhabitants would be deprived of subsistence, and that superb metropolis converted into a sad and frightful desert.

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If any proofs are wanting, enter the shops of the citizens, and ask them who are their best customers, and who pay them the most regularly? They will immediately answer, that they are the unfortunate women, who deny themselves almost the necessaries of life to purchase fine clothes, and spend in one moment the whole gains of a week. Without them, the theatres would be empty: they not only repair to all public places in crowds, but draw after them thousands of young men, who frequent these places, merely to see and converse with them. Every one who knows London, must be of my way of thinking.

A young unmarried Englishman, with a large fortune, spends but a small share of it on his common expences; the greatest part is destined to his pleasures, that is to say, to the ladies. A tavern-keeper, in Drury-Lane, prints every year an account of the *women of the town*, entitled, *Harris's List of Covent-Garden Ladies*. In it, the most exact description is given of their names, their lodgings, their faces, their manners, their talents, and even their tricks. It must of course happen, that there will sometimes be a little degree of partiality in these details:

however, notwithstanding this, eight thousand copies are sold annually.

The English women are so handsome, and the desire to please them, and to obtain their favours, is so ardent and so general, that it is not in the least surprising, that those islanders should hold a *certain unnatural crime* in the utmost abhorrence. They speak in no part of the world with so much horror of this infamous passion, as in England. The punishment by law is imprisonment, and the pillory. With this accusation, it is, however, better to suffer death at once; for, on such an occasion, the fury of the populace is unbounded, and even the better sort of people have no compassion for the culprit. It is very uncommon to see a person convicted, and punished for this crime; not on account of the paucity of the numbers charged with perpetrating it, but because they never yield to such a brutal appetite but with the utmost precaution.

A criminal prosecution was commenced, on a charge of this kind, against Foote, the celebrated comedian, about a year before his death. The intrepid actor soon after appeared upon the



the stage, in one of his gayest characters; but the noise from the pit, and the *epithet* made use of, and repeated from box to box, entirely disconcerted him. At length he obtained liberty to speak. He then assured the audience that he was innocent, and besought them not to condemn him unheard: he promised to demonstrate before a court of justice the falsity and the malice of the accusation; and added that, until he had fully established his innocence, he would not aspire to the continuance of that favour with which the public had always honoured him. The spectators were appeased. He acted his part, and received the usual plaudits: he also gained his cause.

The custom so common in other parts of Europe, of men's *saluting* each other, is looked upon with the utmost indignation in England. A foreigner who would attempt such a thing in the streets of London, would in all probability be insulted by the populace. Instead of embracing, they *shake hands*. This ceremony repeated more or less often, expresses the different degrees of goodwill, friendship, and esteem. People sometimes act this *pantomime* in such a *forcible* manner, that they make each others hands and arms ache.

If *kissing* is not allowed among the men, this prohibition is amply recompensed by the right of publicly embracing the ladies. The husbands themselves are not vexed at this agreeable custom. Neither jealousy nor shame can prevent it : practice has thus rendered a fashion entirely indifferent, which, in Italy, would be regarded as a presumption which the offender could only expiate with his blood.

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## CHAPTER IV.

*The Manner of Living in England—Coffee-Houses—  
Lloyd's—Assurance Offices—Domestic Customs—  
The Contrast between French and English Dinners  
—Cookery—Liquors—Dress—Singular Request  
to the King—Servants—Sunday—Good-nature of  
the People—Boxing—Marshal Saxe's Dispute with  
a Scavenger—The King of Bath.*

THE English live in a very remarkable manner. They rise late, and spend most of the morning, either in walking about town or sitting in the coffee-houses. There they not only read the newspapers, but transact business. Associations, insurances, bets, the trade in foreign bills; all these things are not only talked of, but executed in these public places. They there form connections, conclude bargains, talk of the intrigues and the cabals of the court, criticise works of genius and art, and

enter into patriotic resolutions concerning the good of the state.

Each profession has its own particular coffee-house; such as lawyers, the military men, the learned and men of wit.

There are several dozens of these around the Royal Exchange, where more business is transacted than in the Exchange itself. That of Lloyd's in a particular manner deserves to be noticed; I do not think that there is another equal to it in all the world. Those merchants who speculate in insurances, and who in 1778 amounted to six hundred, assemble there. They subscribe ten guineas a piece per annum, and, by means of that sum, carry on an immense foreign correspondence with all the countries in Europe.

This society accordingly receives the earliest and most authentic intelligence, respecting the politics or the commerce of all the nations inhabiting the four quarters of the globe. They often inform government of circumstances that they would not know till long after from their ministers and their agents; and which, perhaps, they would never otherwise hear of.

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The spirit of order and exactness, introduced into their interesting regulations, is so perfect, that the most extraordinary news receives a certain degree of authenticity by coming from that place.

As these gentlemen, in common with the rest of the nation, are famous for their *public spirit*, they are not barely contented with informing their particular friends, but transcribe their intelligence into a book, for the inspection of the nation at large. They also publish the arrival of all vessels, whether English or foreign, that come into any of the ports of England. There is not one of these, whose good or bad properties they are unacquainted with. They also know their age, the character of the captain, &c. &c. Being composed almost entirely of rich merchants, there is no danger of losing the sum assured, but in case of a *general bankruptcy*; and such is their known probity, and reputation, that they are often, in doubtful cases, appointed umpires by foreign states.

An English coffee-house has no resemblance to a French or German one. You neither see billiards nor backgammon tables; you do not



even hear the least noise; every body speaks in a low tone, for fear of disturbing the company. They frequent them principally to read the PAPERS, a task that is absolutely necessary in that country.

The dinners of the English, like all their domestic customs, have something peculiar to themselves. By supposing every thing to be entirely opposite to what it is in Paris, one may form a just idea of these houses in London, where the old fashions are still kept up. The number of people who live in the Anglo-Gallic style is very small.

Soup, which is the first dish in France, never appears on any table in London. The French eat a great deal of bread, and very little meat; the English much meat, and little bread. Joints, in France, are either roasted or boiled to rags; they eat them almost raw in England. Ragouts, sauces, and *made dishes*, are the delicacies of the French; the English are for what is simple and natural; they even push this taste too far. The tables of the former are often too small for the dishes; the entertainments of the latter consist of two or three large pieces of meat,  
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or of prodigious pies, in which some hundreds of birds are entombed.

The dessert, in France, is composed of fruits and confectionary; in England, of large cheefes. Among one nation, they eat more than they drink; among the other, they drink more than they eat, and regard their liquors as the chief article in a repast.

The English are in a hurry during their meals, that they may sooner indulge this passion. The ladies then leave them to enjoy themselves with greater freedom. Politics immediately commence, and *healths* continually go round; each guest proposes a toast in his turn, the master of the house having first given his. They then fill their glasses, and, naming either a minister or a beauty, empty them in a moment.

Napkins, which have been disused for twenty years, are now beginning to be introduced. Those who are attached to the old customs, ridicule the use of them. This precaution, they say, is only necessary for children; grown persons have no occasion for them, as they can cover themselves with the table cloth, which is of an extraordinary length. They  
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change the knife and fork with every plate. They do not use these instruments indifferently in either hand, as in all the other nations of Europe; the fork is always in the left, and the knife in the right hand. It is by this method, which is infinitely more commodious than ours, that you may immediately know an Englishman before he has spoken a single word.

The discredit into which English cookery has fallen among foreigners, proceeds entirely from the prejudices entertained against their manner of dressing victuals. But who, in the whole world, would not prefer flesh full of succulent and nourishing juices, to those roasted meats which are insipid to the taste, if not eaten with an unwholesome sauce? I have known ladies brought up very delicately, and used to all the elegancies of foreign tables, who, on their first arrival in London, have been disgusted with the victuals; but they soon changed their minds, and found them very agreeable afterwards. It is the simplicity in the dressing, that alone generates such prejudices in the breasts of strangers.

Their drinks also are remarkable, on account of the singular mixtures of which they are composed. Sillabub, for example, is a composition

of red wine, milk and sugar. The common people enjoy themselves, during the winter, with warm \* beer mixt with bitter essences, and with ale in which gin, sugar, and eggs have been boiled together. It is their attachment to strong liquors, that makes them so very fond of portwine, which is sold at a high price. Burgundy and champaign, are exceedingly dear, on account of the duties: notwithstanding this, the consumption of these wines is very great in London, where they like every thing that is *powerful* and *heady*. Although cyder is allowed to be equally agreeable; yet it is drunk only in the distant counties.

They are peculiarly attached to porter: on this account, there are no less than eight thousand ale-houses in the metropolis and its neighbourhood. In these, all ranks are mixed and confounded together: it is not uncommon to meet with even persons of quality there.—It is well known that Swift and Sterne frequented them, to study the human heart.

The impost on coffee is so great, that it pays a duty of more than seven pence a pound.

\* Purl,

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This does not, indeed, lessen the consumption ; the exorbitant price, however, occasions it to be drunk very weak. This custom is so prevalent, that even the richest people will not use it when strong ; the most contemptible tradesman in all Germany drinks better coffee than they do. In respect to tea, the English are, on the other hand, uncommonly nice ; and it is calculated, that they consume more of this commodity than all the rest of Europe. Thousands of poor people live on this beverage, and bread and butter, which is said to correct its bad qualities ; but they take care that the one is good, and the other strong. Our manner of drinking it, would not in the least agree with them ; for, that they may the better enjoy the flavour of the herb, they colour it with only two or three drops of milk.

They generally eat wheaten bread. The prodigious swarm of Germans settled in London, have prevailed on some bakers to make *rye bread* ; the sale of it is, however, very confined, for my countrymen themselves soon prefer the other. I have offered it to their beggars, and even they have rejected it.

It is surprising, that mankind generally have  
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an invincible disgust to all the viands which they have not been used to during their infancy. This singular aversion, which we perceive in all nations, can never be overcome but by the most pressing want. *Sour crout*, a composition long unknown among the English, has been very beneficial to their sailors during distant voyages; and yet, it was necessary to take infinite pains to reconcile them to this antiscorbutic nourishment.

It was not until Captain Cook's second expedition, that, exhorted and encouraged by the two Forsters, the seamen used themselves to it. During that tedious and dangerous navigation in unknown seas, one man alone perished; and it was to this composition that the fortunate circumstance, of which, till then, there had been no example, was generally attributed. Government have therefore taken the proper precautions, that no ship of war, destined for a long voyage, should be unprovided with this excellent preventive.

It is absolutely necessary that travellers should conform themselves to the manners of every climate, in respect to diet. Disease, and even death itself, are the sad consequences of this neglect;

fect; and I could cite a number of examples to this purpose. The East Indies become graves to thousands of Europeans, merely because they choose to live there in the same manner as in their native country. Without this caprice, the projected journey through Arabia would have succeeded, and NIEBUHR had not returned alone.

A foggy air, and nourishing food, make it necessary to drink strong liquors in England. Those who use water often lose their health, and sometimes their lives. The same effects would attend the use of the English regimen in Italy, where the burning heats require sherbets, cooling liquors, and other customs, and, in one word, a different manner of living. It is very common to hear strangers blame the climate, instead of the unhappy consequences of impolitic negligence.

The English are unfortunately led away, beyond all the other countries in Europe, by the luxury of dress, which every day seems to increase. Twenty years ago, gold and silver lace was not worn but at court, and the theatres; persons elegantly attired always rode in carriages.

carriages. The people crowded about a gentleman who walked in full dress, either in the streets or the park; they never used swords, and the beaux wore their hats. Except the last custom, none of the others prevail. One now often meets with laced clothes; even the common people sometimes appear in embroidered vests. In general, however, the English still wear plain broad cloth, both in summer and winter, but it is of the finest kind: a common tradesman will use no other. They do not cover themselves with *pelisses*, but great coats, which guard against the cold in winter, and the rain in the spring and autumn.

It is in this simple dress that the ministers of state walk about the streets and public places, without being followed by a single domestic.

The English in general, even those of the middling class, wear very excellent linen, and change it daily. The fineness of the shirt and stockings, a good hat and the best shoes, distinguish a man in opulent circumstances; no attention whatever is paid to the coat. The richest citizens frequent the 'Change in clothes very old, and much worn. The custom of wearing rich buttons prevails more than ever within these  
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few years ; so that a simple frock often costs more than a laced one.

It is almost in spite of themselves that the English have adopted the custom of dressing their hair ; the people employed in that business are the most inexpert of any in Europe.

Some years since, the wig-makers of London presented a very singular petition to the king, beseeching the sovereign to cut off his hair, and wear a wig : " Your majesty's example," said they, " will be followed by every one ; and " our trade, which is now ruined, will soon " acquire its wonted consequence and celebrity." The king laughed at this pleasant request, but did not think proper to grant it.

I have already more than once had occasion to mention some characteristic traits of the English nation. The great difference betwixt them and the rest of Europe, proceeds entirely from the liberty which they enjoy, and which gives occasion to a thousand extraordinary and singular customs.

It is not according to our ideas that we ought to calculate the space that separates the  
different

different classes of men in that monarchico-republican government. This observation extends even to servants. The first man in the kingdom is cautious of striking his domestics; for they not only may defend themselves against him, but also commence an action in a court of justice: in such a case, a pecuniary recompence, and many disagreeable circumstances, are sure to follow. They observe with a great deal of reason, that as poverty and dependance contribute very little to the happiness of this life, it would be extremely cruel to aggravate the lot of those who are obliged to live in servitude, by a conduct unauthorised by the laws. If a servant commits a fault not punishable by the magistrate, his master can only dismiss him.

Those will be much deceived, who may from thence imagine, that an English footman will consequently be impertinent. On the contrary, I am convinced, that no part of Europe abounds with better domestics. The noble condescension with which they are treated, the fear of not receiving a character, and the largeness of their wages, all tend to keep them in good order, and inspire them at once with zeal and activity.



One is also astonished at the politeness and promptitude with which he is attended at taverns and coffee-houses; a circumstance which but ill corresponds with the pride of the nation: it must, however, be recollected, that the waiters always expect a gratification, and that, in some of the principal houses, this amounts to a great sum in the course of the year.

The scandalous practice of giving *vails*, so much in vogue twenty years ago, is now almost entirely banished: it exists no where but among the lower orders of the people. Formerly a visitor was obliged to distribute a great deal of money among the servants, when he dined with a man of quality; so that it was much cheaper to go to a tavern, than to accept of such an invitation. It is to Lord Chesterfield that the English are indebted for the abolition of this custom: his representations had such weight with the nobility, that they unanimously agreed to discountenance it.

The appearance of the female domestics will, perhaps, astonish a foreigner more than any thing in London. They are in general handsome and well clothed: their dress has the appearance of some taste, and their conversation such as if  
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they had kept the best company. A stranger is apt to be embarrassed at first, and can scarce imagine that they are not gentlewomen. They are usually clad in gowns well adjusted to their shapes, and hats adorned with ribbands. There are some who even wear silk and satin, when they are dressed. All their work consists in keeping the house neat, and dusting the furniture. To this employment they attend for a few hours in the morning; and after that, all the rest of the day is entirely at their own disposal.

As to a *lady's maid*, the eye of the most skilful *connoisseur* can scarcely distinguish her from the mistress. The appearance of a waiting-woman is that of an opulent and a fashionable person; she usually accompanies her lady in public, expects particular attention to be paid to her, and, after some years of service, generally receives a small annuity, which makes her comfortable for life.

When out of place, servants of all denominations apply to a register-office; a singular institution, known only in that country, by means of which they are immediately provided with employment.

Sunday

Sunday is very strictly observed in England ; and as all kinds of work, even music, are prohibited, that day is therefore usually destined to the pleasures of the country. All the citizens who have country-houses, repair to them on Saturday afternoon, to make preparations for their friends on the following day. The prodigious number of ale-houses and taverns, situated near the capital, is then full of persons of both sexes ; and, contrary to the general usage, an *ordinary* is kept for their reception. All the great roads around London are also crowded with carriages, horses, and foot-passengers ; and I may fairly assert, that three-fourths of the inhabitants of the capital keep the *Sabbath* in this manner.

It is very singular, that these weekly revels never occasion any disturbances, or excesses of any kind.

It seems to me, that no better proof need be alleged of the good nature of the English, than their deportment on all public occasions. One is astonished to observe compassion, benevolence, generosity, and, in one word, all the social virtues, carried to so high a degree of perfection, among the very lowest of the people. If a stranger loses his way,  
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and happens to ask for any particular street or house, the first person whom he meets will point out his road, and even accompany him, without the hope of any recompence : no one ever experienced a refusal.

When any embarrassment is occasioned by the jostling of coaches in a narrow street, the people immediately fly to relieve them, and restore order ; they are perfectly satisfied with thanks. In Paris, it is not unusual to see blood spilt on such occasions ; the magistrates, therefore, distribute soldiers in all parts of the city, to preserve tranquillity. Such a precaution is never made use of in London ; yet the greatest regularity prevails at Ranelagh, the Pantheon, and other public places, notwithstanding the multitude of carriages which are assembled there.

The king of England, in 1784, gave an amiable instance of the humanity so general in that kingdom. Happening to stroll in one of the agreeable walks in the neighbourhood of Richmond, without any other company than that of some of his sons, he met with a poor villager, who had been selling provisions in the town. His cart was stuck in a ditch, and having no help, he was attempting in vain to get it out. Without deliberating a moment, the mo-

march, aided by his children, went to his assistance, and immediately relieved it with his own hands. The peasant, unacquainted with the rank of those who had come so generously and opportunely to his succour, in the joy of his heart, proposed to carry them to the nearest ale house, and treat them with a pot of beer. His offer produced a few pieces of gold in return, and their departure gave him time to recover from his astonishment. The present which occasioned this charming action to be known, at the same time betrayed its author.

On any public commotion, when the people run into the streets, and assemble in crowds, the greatest care is taken lest any accident should happen to the women and children, whom they either make room for, or carry in their arms, that they may be better seen.

A lady of fashion, the wife of a minister from one of the German courts, when coming out of the play-house, happened to get into a crowd, where the pressure was extreme, and the danger of her situation the more alarming, as she expected in a few days to become a mother. At the moment when she was about to faint, a person who supported her with his arm, cried out, "Gentlemen, make room, I beseech you, for a *lady with child*,"

"who



“ who is suddenly taken ill.” She herself has often assured me, that a *thunder-bolt* could not have more quickly dispersed the mob, than this exclamation. Every one immediately gave way, and she luckily got to her carriage without any further delay.

In the year 1780, when the dregs of the people acted the GORDONIAD, and made conflagrations their pastime, these wretches never carried their violence so far as to attack a woman ; even those of the catholic religion were in perfect safety. When the populace, who were enraged against the archbishop of York, were about to set fire to his house, Mrs. Markham, his wife, appeared at the window, and addressed them in the following terms :  
 “ Gentlemen, a lady has this very moment been  
 “ taken in *labour* here ; and as it is impossible to  
 “ remove her and the infant, I hope that you have  
 “ too much humanity to occasion their death.”  
 This ingenious petition had the proper effect, and the crowd instantly dispersed.

When a quarrel happens in the streets, the passengers immediately interfere. Persons of the highest rank do not hesitate for a single moment to become mediators. The day after my arrival in London, I had an opportunity of being a witness

to this practice. in an affair where I myself was interested. A young jew, a native of Germany, having attempted to cheat me in the most bare-faced manner in the world, I felt myself so much piqued at the fellow's impudence, that I could not contain my resentment. The customs of the English being entirely unknown to me, I acted exactly in the same manner as I should have done in my native country, on finding my honour wounded. I accordingly seized the culprit by the collar, who, fearful of my resentment, cried out with all his might, and soon gathered a crowd around us. As I was not ignorant of the language, I immediately recounted the circumstances which gave occasion to such violence. Some of the people, however, informed me, in the most polite terms, that, according to the laws of *that* country, no offence whatsoever could warrant my behaviour. The jew, who was conscious of his guilt, did not choose to prosecute me, but escaped as fast as he could, and gave me time to profit by the just observation of these worthy people, and to return them my thanks.

In similar disputes, when the parties agree to terminate their differences by a *boxing-match*, the spectators, far from opposing them, encourage the idea. This custom, which proceeds from

certain false principles of courage and equality, is not, however, so much in fashion as formerly. Even persons of quality were not heretofore ashamed of engaging in such quarrels. They have of late, however, left the glory of them entirely to the populace, who, being no longer animated by their example, begin now to have less relish for them.

The two combatants strip to the waist, and attack each other with their *fists*; a *ring* is then immediately formed by the populace. His *second* assists the person who falls, wipes the sweat from his body, and re-animates his courage. When they fight on a stage, each is also attended by a *bottle-holder*, who washes his friend's face, and usually squeezes a lemon into his mouth. The fight often lasts half an hour, and sometimes longer, till one of the parties declares that he is vanquished:—this they call *giving in*. The victor, who is often more hurt than the person whom he has conquered, is then conducted home in triumph by the spectators.

It is not in the power of prejudice itself to stifle, in the hearts of that people, the esteem which a courageous conduct always inspires. I

myself happened to be present at a *fight* betwixt an Englishman and a Frenchman. The first was looked upon as a master in the science of boxing ; the other was ignorant of the first principles of the art ; he therefore entirely confided in his strength, which, indeed, so effectually befriended him, that he struck his adversary to the ground with the first blow, and rendered him unable to continue the combat. It seemed as if this *blow* had destroyed the national hatred, so forcibly impressed in the breasts of the spectators ; every one was eager to overwhelm the victorious Frenchman with praises and caresses ; they afterwards joined to treat him at an ale-house.

The *art of boxing* has certain rules, from which no one ever departs : whoever attempts to infringe them, becomes immediately exposed to the fury of the populace. For example, when one party falls, his adversary must not strike him ; and the combat is immediately to cease, on either of them acknowledging himself to have been beaten.

On the event of these battles, which are sometimes attended with fatal consequences, considerable *bets* frequently depend ; it is not uncommon, however,

however, to hear the combatants, who are generally instigated by hatred alone, cry out, on these occasions, " That they fight for love !"

The celebrated Marshal Saxe was once challenged in this manner, by a scavenger who was employed in sweeping the streets. He, relying on his amazing strength, accepted the proposal ; the scavenger, therefore, began to strip according to custom ; but he had scarce taken off his shirt, when the Marshal seizing him by the arms, to the great astonishment of the spectators, threw him with the same ease as if he had been a truss of straw, into his own cart ; where he struggled a long time with his hands and feet, and was very near being stifled by the mud.

The English used formerly to fight duels in the same manner as other nations ; but the Puritans discountenanced this barbarous custom. These enthusiasts, who would allow no other rule of conduct than that prescribed by the bible, having found nothing therein to authorize this species of combat, took a decided aversion to it. At last, Cromwell, by enacting severe laws against this practice, abolished it entirely. This



was, perhaps, the first time that fanaticism ever produced such happy consequences.

Within these last fifty years, however, duels have begun to be again in vogue, in the same proportion that boxing has declined. But as every thing in that country is different from what it is elsewhere, it so happens that this custom, which in other kingdoms is confined to a certain rank, has no bounds among them. You may there see priests, merchants, and clerks, terminate their differences with a case of pistols.

Some years since, two negroes in livery fought each other in this manner. As the stage continually satirises such extravagancies as these, this ridiculous practice is now discountenanced.

The English are still very fond of cold baths. There are a prodigious number of these in London, where one may bathe daily at the rate of a guinea per annum. This practice is much recommended by the best English physicians. The ancient Romans were also very much addicted to it. It was by these means that Antonius Musa restored the health of the emperor

emperor Augustus. The senate, on account of this cure, remunerated him with a magnificent present, and erected a statue to his memory, which was placed with that of Esculapius. Septimus Severus made use of the cold bath daily; and as he resided a long time in Britain, it is probable that he introduced the practice into that island. The Saxons borrowed the custom from the ancient Britons.

England possesses many mineral springs, a great number of which still retain the names of the saints after whom they were formerly called. The fountains where the first christian preachers baptised their converts, inspired a certain religious veneration, and were esteemed *holy*. The monks, taking advantage of such prejudices, attributed in their legends certain miraculous virtues to these places, after they had first discovered their natural effects.

Of all the *waters* in England, those of Bath are the most remarkable; they were known even by the Romans, who consecrated them to Minerva. The Britons called this place EAER PALLADDUR, or the City of Pallas.

Bath is a handsome town, and the public buildings which it contains are really magnifi-

cent. It is not only resorted to by the sick, but even by those in health, whom the variety of pleasures to be seen there, attracts from every part of the three kingdoms. The *season* when it is most frequented is the beginning of winter.

To regulate the diversions, and preserve order and regularity amongst such a prodigious number of people, who are at the same time rich and free, it has been thought proper to choose a person who is stiled KING OF BATH; to whom the most entire obedience is paid, in regard to every thing that concerns the general good. This convention is made and agreed to by the first people in the kingdom, who regularly frequent the place, and maintain their sovereign in his prerogatives. This situation is equally honourable and lucrative, for it produces a revenue of sixteen hundred pounds sterling annually. It is for life, unless great and forcible reasons oblige the subjects to dethrone their monarch.

This eminent post is usually given to some gentleman, who joins to much experience a considerable portion of wit, gaiety, and knowledge of the world. All these qualities, together with an extraordinary talent for inventing new pleasures, and arranging elegant entertainments, were united in

an Englishman of the name of Nash, who for many years ruled Bath with an unlimited sway. He died in 1761, and was greatly lamented by his whole kingdom.

The throne is at present filled by a gentleman who was formerly a captain in the army.

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## CHAPTER V.

*Character of the English Ladies—Of the Nobility—Whimsical Anecdotes—Hon. Mr. Montague—Lotteries—Insurance Offices—Betts—Sir Watkin W. Wynne—Lord Baltimore—May-day—Voyage to New Zealand—Otaheite—Charles I.—Anecdote of a Spaniard—National Hatred—Aversion to Anatomical Operations—Mrs. Phillips—Ballads.*

OF all the remarkable objects which England offers to the eye of a foreigner, no one is more worthy of his admiration, than the astonishing beauty of the women.

It produces such a surprising effect, that every stranger must acknowledge the superiority of the English ladies over all others. The most exact proportions, an elegant figure, a lovely neck, a skin



skin uncommonly fine, and features at once regular and charming, distinguish them in an eminent degree. Their private virtues also render them capable of enjoying all the felicity of the marriage state.

The proneness of the whole nation to melancholy, renders the women grave and serious; their minds are less occupied about pleasures, than in solicitude for the happiness of their husbands, and the management of their domestic concerns. Even women of quality suckle their children; they think that the name and duties of a *mother* have nothing in them which they ought to blush at, and that no station on earth is comparable to the pleasures of maternal tenderness, and the agreeable reflections which result from it.

Notwithstanding vice is often pushed to the extreme in the capital, it is very uncommon to see a married woman become profligate, and give way to infamous pleasures. To this there is always an insurmountable bar in her love for her family, the care of her household, and her own natural gravity. I am of opinion, that there is not a city in the whole world where  
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the honour of a husband is in less danger than in London.

It is to this serious and melancholy disposition that we ought to attribute the attachment of the English catholics to the cloister, and which has induced so many of them to retire to France, and still more to Flanders. They have even established a species of convents in England, for those who do not like to leave their native country. A certain number of ladies live there in common, perform divine service together, and conform to all the institutions of that order to which their *house* belongs. Like other nuns, they take the vows, and their dress is always plain and modest.

I have already mentioned the prodigious attachment of the English to politics. This passion is actually among them an inducement to marriage. A husband who can talk of nothing but public affairs, is always sure to find in his wife a person with whom he may converse concerning those topics which interest him most. He has no need to go abroad, to satisfy his appetite for this darling subject.

The English are not ungrateful to nature for her prodigality

prodigality towards them. The children are never bound up in swaddling-clothes, but covered with a thin dress, which gives a perfect freedom to all their motions. The great advantages arising from inoculation, become every day more perceptible.

The schools for the education of young people of both sexes, are almost always in the country. In walking through the charming villages which surround the metropolis, one is delighted to see three or four houses together, dedicated solely to this purpose. These support a prodigious number of language-masters, dancing-masters, music-masters, &c. &c.

The ladies, trusting perhaps too much to their natural charms, often neglect the means of setting them off to advantage. But a very few even of the women of the town make use of *rouge*. Many women of fashion, when dressed in the most elegant manner, do not use hair-powder ; *neatness*, however, which seems actually to be a *rage* amongst them, is never neglected.

The most elegant part of an Englishwoman's apparel is her hat, which is usually adorned with ribbands and feathers. No female, of whatever rank, dares appear in the streets of London on foot,

foot, without one of these ; the very beggars wear them. The art with which they place them, is but imperfectly imitated by foreigners, who know not how to derive from them all their magical advantages. The charming effect which they produce made Linguet observe, that if Homer had been acquainted with this enchanting dress, he would not only have given a cestus to Venus, but also a hat.

The fair-sex in that country have a number of customs peculiar to themselves, and among others that of riding on horseback ; in this situation, they may be seen galloping by hundreds along Hyde-Park. On these occasions, they are always dressed like Amazons ; a practice introduced by queen Anne, the consort of Richard the II<sup>d</sup>, and which has continued to the present time. The ladies also think it indecent to shew themselves at the window. It is only an extraordinary circumstance that will make a woman of character open it, to satisfy her curiosity. The women of the town, however, are entirely above such a prejudice.

The education among the English, as far as it regards health, is excellent : I cannot, however, say so much in respect to morals. The abuses which prevail in the great schools are well known ; I shall therefore

therefore be silent concerning them. After a long contention concerning the advantages and disadvantages of a public or private education, it seems at last to have been decided in favour of the former. The young duke of Bedford, who is the richest peer in the kingdom, was for several years at Westminster, where he was brought up as other young men. His table and his bed were entirely the same as theirs. Two guineas a week were allowed him for pocket money; and out of his income, which amounts to sixty-thousand pounds per annum, five hundred only were expended in his education.

All the exercises which tend to bring the muscles into action, and to make the body healthy and robust, are the daily recreations of these public schools, which, notwithstanding their numberless disadvantages, do not, however, make youth effeminate.

A great number of children of good extraction are destined from the earliest age to commerce, and educated accordingly. This practice, so wise in itself, and which was the source from which the Genoese nobility derived their opulence, and by which the illustrious house of Medicis were raised  
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to a throne, where they became the benefactors of mankind, was not introduced into England until about the middle of the seventeenth century.

The English nobility during the civil war, being almost entirely attached to the king, were banished from all employments by the House of Commons, whose power then preponderated; they therefore had no resource but in trade. Those who possessed abilities amassed immense riches, and contributed by their example to remove the ancient prejudices which still subsisted in their country against the employment of a merchant. Soon after this, some of the first people in the kingdom became the most zealous partizans of commerce, and embarked their fortunes in it, by which means they at once gave activity and vigour to trade. This, it is affirmed, was the origin of that splendour and opulence which England soon after acquired. In our own time, we have seen the son of Sir Robert Walpole, formerly prime minister of England, a private banker, and the brother of lord Oxford, a citizen of London.

People of rank not only become merchants, but some of them have even condescended to learn trades. It is only however from whim, that a person of quality ever takes such a strange resolution. I shall mention, for example, the honourable Wortley

ley Montague, brother-in-law to lord Bute, who, when a child, ran away from his father's house to become a chimney-sweeper. The rags with which he was covered, the coarse fare, and the blows which he received daily, seemed preferable, in his eyes, to all the advantages appertaining to his birth. For nine months he followed this profession, and remained in the capital unknown : at length, however, he was discovered and brought home, where every thing was practised to cure him of his singular attachments, but in vain. He soon afterwards eluded the vigilance of his relations, embarked as a cabinboy in a vessel that sailed for Lisbon, and then travelled over Spain as an assistant to a muleteer. The life of this man, who died some years since in the East, is one of the most melancholy and remarkable examples of the waywardness of human nature.

These fantastical actions are very frequent in England, and they there pass under the denomination of *whims*.

In the year 1776, a person died in London, who by means of trade amassed the sum of sixty thousand pounds sterling. By his will, he appointed one of his relations his sole heir ; with this particular condition, however, that he should repair  
every

every day to the Royal Exchange, and remain there from two till three o'clock. Neither the weather, nor his own private affairs, nor any thing but bad health, of which he was to produce a certificate, could excuse him from this task. If he omitted his attendance for a single day, he was to lose the fortune by an express clause in the will, and a certain charitable foundation was to become entitled to the whole estate.

The testator, by this means, intended to pay a compliment to commerce, by which he had procured his riches ; but this *whim* made a slave of his heir. It was on Sunday alone that he could leave London, because the Exchange was then shut. I have seen this man, and been witness to his extreme discontent.

An English nobleman in the decline of life, having passed a very restless night in one of his country-houses, formed the resolution of marrying ; and, that he might avoid trouble, resolved to espouse the first woman that he should see next morning. Full of this idea, he rose at break of day and rang his bell. His *valet-de-chambre* appeared immediately, and having received orders to call up one of the women, he ran for the house-keeper. Scarce had she entered his apartment, when his lordship said,

said, "Go and dress yourself immediately to accompany me to church, for I intend to make you my bride this very day." The housekeeper smiled, and imagining that her master only meant to joke with her, departed without saying a word. Half an hour after, his lordship rang again, and inquired of the servant, whether she was not yet dressed? On being informed that she was employed about the domestic affairs, he ordered any other female to be sent him, and accordingly one of his scullions was produced. She immediately accepted of the proposal, and in an hour afterwards became his wife. A son, who afterwards filled one of the first offices in the state, and who is still alive, was the *fruit* of this singular whim.

I was once acquainted with an Englishman, who was extremely amiable in his character, and remarkably polite in his manners, but who had a most fantastical passion, which he assured me was deeply imprinted in his very soul. His greatest pleasure in life was to comb the hair of a beautiful woman. He kept a charming mistress solely for this purpose. He cared but little whether she loved him, or was faithful to his bed; all that he wanted was to please his senses by means of her long and beautiful locks. He has often assured me that this employment produced the most voluptuous sensations.

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The execution of a criminal interests in the most lively manner the celebrated George Selwyn, who is generally loved and admired on account of the goodness of his heart, and the readiness of his wit. Such a spectacle has inexpressible attractions to him, and affects his senses in a manner equally powerful and inexplicable.

One of his friends, after reproaching him with his *whim*, betted a large sum that he would be present at an execution which he named. Mr. Selwyn, accordingly was led away by an invincible impulse ; which not being able to conquer, he actually paid the wager, and repaired to Tyburn. When Damiens the regicide was broke on the wheel at Paris, the wit did not fail to be present : he even gave a sum of money to the executioner to permit him to stand on the scaffold, to contemplate this horrid scene in a more familiar manner.

A love for what is singular and extraordinary, also occasions that spirit of gambling which is so general in England, more especially during the drawing of the lottery. At that time a prodigious number of insurance-offices are opened in all parts of the capital, and policies are made upon particular numbers. In the evening, a large bowl of punch, which is constantly replenished, is placed on

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a table,



a table, around which many unfortunate wretches, becoming intoxicated with the fumes of the liquor, and their passion for gambling, ruin themselves and their families.

Such is the passion of the English for play, that every dispute is generally decided by a bett. I knew an Englishman who laid five hundred pounds, that during a whole year he should sleep every night in a different house in London. The three first months, however, had scarce elapsed, when he repented of his engagement, and chose rather to pay the money than be exposed to the inconvenience of such frequent removals.

In the year 1778, just before the war commenced between England and France, two wealthy Englishmen made the following agreement:—One of them, who did not doubt that hostilities would soon commence, but who imagined the period at a greater distance than was expected, gave a hundred guineas to the other, on condition that he should pay him one guinea a day until war was proclaimed. It so happened however, that, from reasons of state, the war was begun and finished without ever being *proclaimed*. The loser has since offered to pay his antagonist one thousand pounds; which the other however refused, and he now actually receives three hundred

hundred and sixty-five guineas per annum, in consequence of this circumstance.

There are a number of people in England, who take a secret satisfaction in breaking the laws of their country. Some, notwithstanding they are not in want, seem to be impelled by an irresistible desire towards their neighbour's property, in which covetousness has nothing to do. I myself knew a very beautiful woman, who put any thing in her pocket which she happened to see; it was, however, always returned next morning.

Another lady, both young and charming, had the same propensity, without possessing the same honesty. If she stopped any where to make a purchase, she was always sure to *steal* more than she bought. A shopman having conceived violent suspicions against the fair plunderer, resolved to be on the watch; and having caught her one day stealing a piece of Flanders lace, he left it to her choice either to be carried before a magistrate or a clergyman; she accepted of the latter, and the young man at the same time became master of a handsome wife, and twelve thousand pounds sterling.

Another offender of the same kind was not so lucky. His name was Ayre: he was a man about  
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sixty-six years old, and was possessed of thirty thousand pounds sterling in the public funds, which he had procured in business. Being incited solely by avarice, he stole every thing that he could lay his hands upon. One day, while attempting to make off with two quires of paper from the stamp-office, he was caught in the fact, tried for the offence, and, as it was fully proved, was sentenced to be transported to America for seven years. This miserable wretch however, at length, became the just victim of his own sordid avarice ; for his friends having privately agreed with the captain of the ship for a cabin and other necessaries during his passage, he was scarce at sea when he repented of the bargain. He therefore rather chose to sleep on straw with the other criminals, that he might save his money, than on a good bed which he was obliged to pay for. Being soon after seized with a fever, this old man, overwhelmed with age and infirmities, died before his arrival in America.

The conduct of Sir Watkins William Wynne well merits the denomination of a *whim*. This baronet, who is the richest commoner in Wales, when he came of age, gave an entertainment to the nobility, gentry, and farmers of that district, which lasted for three days, and by its magnificence was not unworthy of a sovereign. The guests, who

amounted to eighteen thousand of both sexes, ate, drank, and danced in the open air.

The annals of England are full of whimsical occurrences. In the county of Essex, there is a village called Dunmow, into which the lord of the manor, who died in the thirteenth century, introduced a singular custom, and at his death left a fund for perpetuating it. By this, any husband becomes entitled to a sitch of bacon, who can solemnly swear that he has not, for a whole year, disputed with his wife, and never once, during that period, repented of his marriage.

The records of that place notice only three men, who, during the space of more than three centuries, have been able to take such an oath.

But none of the English of the present age have become so remarkable by their singularities, as the famous Lord Baltimore, whose whole life was one uninterrupted series of innumerable oddities.

His follies, however, never hurt any one: on the contrary, they were generally attended with uncommon marks of goodness and benevolence. His fortune was immense, for it amounted to nearly forty thousand a year, the greatest part of which was transmitted to him from the province

vince of Maryland alone. He had laid it down as a principle, to live entirely according to his own fancy; in consequence of this, he never solicited those employments and dignities, to which, both on account of his fortune and his abilities, he had a right to aspire. He never went to court. An attachment to the *fair-sex* was his strongest passion; a circumstance which was greatly augmented by his travels in the East. On his return to England, he built a superb house, in the most pleasant part of London, after the mode of a celebrated HARAM in Constantino-ple. The edifice being finished, he formed it into a seraglio, which he furnished with handsome women, to whom, except the permission of going out, he refused nothing. They were, however, regulated by certain rules, and to these he exacted the strictest obedience. His lordship lived in this manner, in the capital of a christian country, exactly as if he had been a mussulman. If he disliked any of his sultanas, they were loaded with presents, and allowed to depart: some of them actually received portions, and were enabled to marry in consequence of his liberality.

Although this kind of life did very little harm, and the English, as we have already said, are extremely indulgent towards *whims* and *caprices* of



every kind, yet the inhabitants of London could not bear those Turkish customs. Songs and satires were daily composed on this English bashaw, and the most trifling anecdotes of his domestic life were wrought up into novels and romances. The courtiers, who never could pardon the contempt with which he treated their manner of living, also endeavoured to ridicule his conduct.

In a short time, one of the young women whom he entertained, was prevailed upon to accuse him of having committed a rape upon her. A criminal process was instituted in consequence of this accusation; but his lordship vindicated his innocence, and triumphed over the malice of his enemies. This affair, however, made a lively impression on his mind; he dismissed his mistresses, sold his house, which is at present occupied by the duke of Bolton, gave away the magnificent furniture, and in a short time left his native country. He died soon after at Naples, in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

The immense riches possessed by the English, enable them to indulge in the most uncommon caprices. A wealthy individual, some years since, built a house not far from Hyde-Park, merely to  
ridicule

ridicule the gothic style. All that was disagreeable and fantastical in that *taste* was here *caricatured*.

A young prodigal, having formed the project of laughing the free-masons into contempt, who used to walk in procession through the capital, on St. John's day, assembled about eighty chimney-sweepers, whom he decorated with the ensigns, and badges usually worn by that fraternity and obliged them to march in a solemn manner through the principal streets.

One may easily conceive the great number of people who were attracted by this pleasantry; and from that time, that society have never publicly celebrated the feast of their patron saint.

I myself assisted at a satirical procession, but of a kind entirely different from the former. The people of England, in the year 1770, were extremely discontented with the administration which at that time governed the affairs of the kingdom, because they imagined that they intended to overturn the constitution. In consequence of this, about a hundred persons, clothed in deep mourning, assembled together, to accompany a hearse covered with black, and followed by attendants in the same manner as at

a funeral. In the inside of this the GREAT CHARTER was placed, surrounded with all the emblems of LIBERTY, the *obsequies* of which they celebrated in the most solemn manner. The procession, followed by an innumerable crowd, passed the palace of St. James's ; and this farce, which terminated without any bad consequences, conveyed a very proper lesson ; at least, the event shewed that it was an useful and a necessary one.

This taste for the EXTRAORDINARY some years since gave rise to a very uncommon project. It never was heard of in Germany, and is but little known even in England.

A Scotchman of the name of Herries, who lived in one of the Hebrides, or Western isles, had been disappointed in love. This circumstance had such an effect on his mind, that he conceived a disgust for a civilized and social life. He therefore resolved to seek for other men, and other countries : in consequence of this he sold his estate, and with the money equipped two vessels, on board of which he embarked, with about sixty of his tenants. His sole intention in this expedition, was to sail for New Zealand, a description of which he had read in Captain Cook's Voyage, and then, to gain the affections

fections of the inhabitants, marry a native of the country, introduce agriculture, and become sovereign of the whole island !

A gentleman of fortune conceived the strange idea of going to reside in Otaheite ; five of his friends offered to accompany him, with their wives and families ; and actually applied to the younger Forster, who had been there, for his opinion of the enterprize.

The history of England affords, even in remote periods, a number of the most fantastical anecdotes. During the civil war between Charles I. and his parliament, at the time when the royalists began to despair of overcoming their enemies, the equestrian statue of the monarch was put up to auction. A cutler, who had a mind to *speculate* on this circumstance, bought it for a trifling sum of money. Being asked what he intended to do with it, he replied, that it was his intention to melt it into *handles for knives*. Accordingly, he furnished his shop with a prodigious number of knives and forks, with *bronze* mounting. In a short time his warehouse was full of customers; persons of both parties ran to purchase knives, the handles of which were made from a statue of a king of England. To the royalists, it afforded a

melancholy but precious remembrance of their dear master ; and as to their antagonists, this extraordinary circumstance was not a little flattering to their republican pride. The mechanic, in the mean time, profited by the enthusiasm of his countrymen, and doubled the price of his commodity, notwithstanding the rapidity of its sale ; so that in two or three years, he realized a considerable fortune.

All this time, however, the public had been duped. The statue had not been melted, as the cutler had asserted, but only buried in the ground, and was actually, on the restoration of Charles II. dug up and restored to that prince, who ordered it to be placed on a new base at Charing-Cross, where it remains to this day.

The emblem on the pedestal is well appropriated to the subject : it consists of two Genii, who, with sorrow imprinted on their countenance, sustain a crown of thorns.

At that unfortunate period, when the English forces, under the command of general Braddock, were beat in America by the French army ; when Minorca was taken by the latter power ; and Admiral Byng, by the intrigues of the ministry of  
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the former, had experienced a violent, and as some still assert, an unmerited end ; the nation became furious. In this unfavourable disposition, the populace having observed a foreigner dressed entirely in the French style, near this statue of Charles I. immediately surrounded him. As he had just arrived in London, and was entirely ignorant of the English language, it was impossible for them to tell what countryman he was.

The mob, in the mean time, held a consultation, and at last it was resolved to place him on his majesty's horse. A ladder was accordingly procured in an instant ; the unhappy stranger was obliged to get on behind the monarch, and, after the most insulting language, was about to be pelted with dirt.

Luckily, however, at the moment when they commenced the assault, a gentleman happened to be passing that way, who having asked the reason of this strange behaviour, and learned from the stranger himself that he was a Spaniard, immediately informed the people of this circumstance.

No sooner did they know their mistake, than they testified the utmost repentance for their precipitation, helped the rider from his uneasy seat,

and delivered him into the hands of his pre-  
server.

The English populace call every foreigner a Frenchman, whether Swiss, German, or Italian. They in general have the greatest hatred that can be imagined to the whole French nation. Of late years, however, this prejudice seems to be entirely banished from the better sort, who now think the language of that polished people a necessary part of their children's education. It was otherwise formerly. The late Lord Suffolk, one of the promoters of the American war, actually employed a master to instruct him in the French grammar, after he became a secretary of state for the foreign department.

The aversion of the English to anatomical dissections, is another of the prejudices which characterize that nation. The surgeons have great difficulty in procuring dead bodies ; they are obliged to pay large sums for them, and are forced to carry them to their houses with the utmost secrecy. If the people hear of it, they assemble in crowds around the house, and break the windows.

What greatly augments the general aversion to so useful a science, is, that the sextons are oftentimes

times induced, by the certainty of a reward, to dig up corpses from the church-yards.

I am astonished that government does not take advantage of this national prejudice, and deliver to the surgeons the bodies of all foot-pads and highway robbers. Murderers, after execution, are always allowed to be dissected.

The English, far from being selfish in regard to the happiness and independence resulting from their liberty, on the contrary, wish to see all the kingdoms of the earth partake of the same blessing: this is another of the traits that characterize them.

At the time when PAOLI and his brave countrymen were obliged to yield to the power of France, the whole nation affirmed, that it was their duty to aid these islanders in the recovery of their liberty. The government, who were not willing at that time to gratify the wishes of the people, were nevertheless obliged to appease their murmurs, by granting a pension of a thousand pounds a year to the Corsican chief, which he enjoys at this very moment.

Every thing in London is made known by means

of hand-bills, or advertisements in the news-papers. One person informs you that his MAD-HOUSE is at your service ; a second keeps a boarding-house for idiots ; a good-natured man-midwife pays the utmost attention to ladies in *certain situations*, and promises to use the most scrupulous secrecy. Physicians offer to cure you of all manner of disorders, *for a mere trifle*, and as for the money to pay them, you need never be at a loss ; thousands daily making tenders of their services to procure you, *at a moment's warning*, any sum that you may stand in need of.

A lady of the name of PHILLIPS is very solicitous in advertising her *goods*, which are undoubtedly very singular in their kind. These consist of ware which are to be met with in very few great cities in Europe. The voluptuaries of Italy are but imperfectly acquainted with them ; and it is only in Paris, and in London, that they are manufactured and used.

I beg leave to mention the BALLADS, among the singularities to be met with in this nation. These, it is true, are also common in France, but not sold publicly as in London.

It is usually females who are employed in this avocation. They wander about the most populous  
streets

streets of the capital, stop now and then and draw a crowd around them, to whom they sing their songs, which they sometimes accompany with music. In these, witty expressions and humorous fallies are often contained ; and one is sometimes sorry to see such talents as the writers must undoubtedly possess, employed in celebrating the trifling occurrences of the day. The subject is generally some political event, which has novelty and interest to recommend it. These ballads, being printed on coarse paper, are sometimes sold for a farthing, and sometimes for a halfpenny a piece : the quickness of the sale, however, amply repays the printer, as they are vended by thousands, if they happen to be popular. The populace purchase these with the utmost eagerness, and consider them as so many delicious morsels.

In other countries, the vulgar imitate the higher ranks ; there, on the contrary, the great are only solicitous to distinguish themselves from the mob. A rich tradesman thinks that he is entitled to the privilege of being *original*, and to live after his own manner.

These originals, whose manners are as savage as they are uncommon, are generally called *John Bulls*, and one sometimes meets with a *John Bull* among people of fashion.

John



John Bull is a favourite subject for the satire of dramatic writers. The people are never more happy than when they see their own follies personified in this character; they are then sure to receive every sarcasm with the loudest applause.

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## CHAPTER VI.

*The Theatres—Italian Opera—Jubilee in honour of Shakespeare—Kelly the Poet—The Contrast betwixt the English and French Theatres—Foote—Garrick—George Alexander Stevens—Mrs. Cornelys—Pantheon—Masquerades—Debating Societies.*

**T**HE two principal theatres in London, open during the winter, are those of Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden ; in the Haymarket play-house, which is under the direction of Mr. Colman, they act only during the summer months.

The Italian Opera generally commences in the month of December, and shuts in June : the representations are twice, and sometimes three times a week. As the English in general have no great attachment to this exotic entertainment, and are, ]  
for the most part, entirely ignorant of the language,

guage, this theatre is treated with the utmost contempt by the more sensible part of the people. The nobility alone support it; and they merely because—*it is the fashion*.

There is not any place of entertainment in Europe where the audience *yawn* so much as there; its decorations, machinery, and wardrobe, are altogether unworthy of the nation. There is nothing tolerable but its music. The great sums given by the managers to the *castratos*, who are better paid in England than any where, prevent them from laying out any money on the necessary decorations. The latter consequently enrich themselves, and the former have been constantly involved in difficulties.

It is very singular, that the manners, customs, and pleasures of other countries, can never become popular in England. This singularity extends to masquerades, and is visible in regard to operas; for although the opera-house is a noble building, and has cost immense sums, it has never yet been able to produce one work whose merit rose above mediocrity.

Every thing that can characterise the English  
nation,

nation, is to be met with in their national theatres alone : there all the efforts of art, the elegance of composition, and the flights of genius, are united. Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden are rivals to each other, and it is difficult to decide, which of them possesses that superiority for which they both contend. .

These two play-houses, for forty days before Easter, perform oratorios on certain days, and sometimes double the price of admission. These are generally HANDEL's compositions. The singers are all English ; and it has been observed by some judicious connoisseurs, that they only want Italian names, and a few journeys to the Continent, to procure uncommon reputation.

The greatest part of the foreign musicians who visit London remain there ; for as that great city is actually a PERU to them, they do not choose to deprive themselves of the lucrative monopoly which they there enjoy, in regard to their own profession.

The English theatre is said to have attained its greatest degree of perfection, during the last years of GARRICK's life ; and, without doubt, this was its most brilliant period. The principal works of  
the

the immortal Shakespeare, and other celebrated dramatic poets, were then represented with a justice, a dignity, and a magnificence, before unknown.

It is true, that even then there was but one GARRICK, but he was seconded by the efforts of other actors, who, without equalling him, were yet worthy of being his associates, in immortalising that celebrated epoch. Among these were Barry, Woodward, Weston, &c. The retreat of the English Roscius, in 1776, was followed by the decline of the stage; the other three died in the same year: Mrs. Abington, the *Athalia* of England, wished also to retire, and could not be prevailed upon to remain without the most earnest entreaties.

Mrs. Siddons and Mr. Henderson supplied, but in an indifferent manner, the public loss; they were the only two who distinguished themselves among the crowd of actors, who were at that time candidates for the favour of the public. They made their first appearance at Drury-Lane, and were loaded with applause. The audience, however, began in a short time to see them with a greater degree of coolness, and became consequently more sparing of their praises.

Among



Among the number of *peculiarities* belonging to the English play-houses, may be reckoned the after-pieces, called ENTERTAINMENTS. These, for the most part, consist of a happy mixture of dialogue, song, and dance; the decorations are amazing, and the machinery is carried to the most astonishing perfection.

The people are uncommonly attached to this kind of diversion. All the great events that occur to the nation are dramatised and represented on the stage: for example, the coronation of the present King; the Prince of Wales receiving the order of the garter; the grand review at Portsmouth, in 1774; the camp at Coxheath; and the siege of Gibraltar. These representations often last for an hour and a half, and are usually given after one of Shakespeare's plays.

The English do not dislike entertainments, however long, provided they have variety to recommend them.

I have seen the Peak of Derbyshire, its grottoes, caverns, and adjoining mountains, and, in fine, every thing that is marvellous in that spot, represented with an art that seemed to equal magic.

But

But the most remarkable of all these, is SHAKESPEARE'S JUBILEE: that in honour of Voltaire, at the French theatre in Paris, in the year 1777, was a paltry imitation of the Jubilee of the English Poet.

When this is acted, the scenes are painted to represent the market-place at Stratford. At a certain signal, the stage is filled with a mob of country people, whom they actually take out of the street on purpose; and then begins a procession, the like of which has never been seen on any theatre.

A troop of dancers march first with a solemn step; after them come nymphs, who strew flowers around. The principal characters in each comedy then make their appearance, preceded by a flag, on which the name of the play is inscribed; a triumphal car, in which THALIA is drawn by *grotesque* figures, closes the first part.

This is succeeded by the Muses, Venus, and the Graces; Cupids, Nymphs, Fawns, and Dryads, who carry the statue of Shakespeare, and keep time to the sound of instruments of music.

Tragedy closes the procession, attended by  
heralds

heralds and standard-bearers, who walk before her : then not only the principal characters in each piece, but also the most striking incidents make their appearance.

In Macbeth the forcerers and their cauldron ; in Coriolanus the tent of that general adorned with the fasces ; and in Romeo and Juliet the tomb of the Capulets forcibly impress the mind with the recollection of the principal incidents in every play.

When the persons of the drama arrive on the stage, they represent, in *dumb-show*, the principal passages of the tragedy.

King Lear exhibits the madness with which he is supposed to be afflicted ; and Richard III. that fury with which he is transported in the midst of the battle.

Macbeth appears with a bloody poniard in his hand, and his lady, as described by the poet, pursued by the avenging furies, and wandering about the palace with a lighted torch. Juliet starts from her lethargy, and lifts her head from the bier. The lictors\* and the eagles precede Julius Cæsar ; a number of Roman ladies prostrate

themselves before Coriolanus, and implore his protection. The procession closes with Melpomene, who is drawn in a chariot, and holds an uplifted dagger in her hand.

The last scene represents a superb temple, the altar of which is adorned with the principal subjects mentioned by the poet, depicted in transparent paintings.

This was a real *apotheosis*, for it was not a literary fanaticism, but a just admiration of every thing that is truly great and sublime, which placed the statue of this immortal genius in the temple of immortality.

The actors constantly pay the same, if not a greater, attention to the galleries than the boxes. Before the curtain is drawn, there is a great deal of noise; and afterwards the players are sometimes pelted with orange-peel: it is very rare, however, that any disturbance is attended with dangerous consequences. In 1772, Hugh Kelly, who, from writing in favour of his country, at length defended the minister, having presented a comedy called, *A Word to the Wise*; the audience were so exasperated, that they would not allow it to be acted. Garrick made his appearance, but for once even he begged

begged in vain : the play therefore was withdrawn, and they instantly became quiet.

The *action* of the English stage is entirely different from that of the French. When one makes a comparison between the good actors in London and Paris, the dissimilarity of their tones, their gestures, and their expressions, appear to be wonderful. The marriage of FIGARO, which was represented in the month of December 1784, almost at the same time in Paris and London, afforded a wonderful instance of this observation. However, an intimate knowledge of both theatres, and even of Nature herself, will easily discover to us, that there is more than *one way* to arrive at perfection.

The English make use of a great deal of action and vivacity on the stage, and are not very strict in adapting these to the propriety of their characters. Very few of them, indeed, ever acquire a dignified manner.

In original plays, taken from their own history, and which consequently exhibit the manners and the customs of the nation, this fault is not so perceptible as in translations, such as *Zara*, *Iphigenia*, the *Horatii*, &c. in which, it must be confessed,



confessed, that they do not excel. The women's parts are, however, better sustained. The actresses support the honour of the theatres, by means of a nobleness and a dignity which charm the beholder.

Mrs. Abington is the greatest ornament of their stage, and unites all parties in her praise. She attempts comedy alone, but with such a happy combination of nature and art, that I may affirm, without fear, that so many talents were never united in any other female performer in Europe. She is now more than fifty years of age, and yet is able to represent, with the same ease and propriety, either a country girl or a woman of fashion.

The Hay-Market theatre was established by the celebrated Foote, the late duke of Cumberland having procured a patent from George II. for that purpose. This actor was styled the *English Aristophanes*. Besides a satirical humour which was natural to him, and discovered itself the moment that he opened his lips, he had the advantage of successfully imitating the Greek poets, by bringing his cotemporaries on the stage, and making them the *butt* of his sarcasms, and the public ridicule.

He

He may be said to have invented a middle kind of dramatic entertainment betwixt comedy and farce. It must be confessed, that his productions have the merit of being so many interesting pictures of the manners of the age. He usually chose some temporary subject, spun it into three acts, and made but little alteration even in the names of those who had the misfortune to fall under his lash. He knew how to imitate with great exactness the gait and conversation of any one, and never forgot to place his hero in the most foolish and ridiculous point of view. When he played, the house, during the whole representation, was affected with a continual and a convulsive laughter.

His satirical vein made him feared by all who approached him, as he spared no one, and his witty sarcastic expressions were never forgotten. But no person dreaded him so much as Garrick, who was more affected by any pleasantry against himself, than by the highest eulogiums in his favour. He made use of every stratagem to procure Foote's friendship, but in vain, for his natural temper could not be confined by any restraint.

Lord Sandwich, who had been greatly offended at some of his jokes, happening to meet him one day, asked, " whether he was most likely to be

“ first \* \* \* \* \* or hanged ? ” “ That entirely depends, my lord,” replied the wit, “ whether I embrace your lordship’s mistress, or your principles.”

The profession of an actor is not thought dishonourable in England; on the contrary, he is regarded and esteemed on account of his talents. Both Garrick and Foote not only lived in the most familiar manner with the first nobility in the kingdom, but actually went to court, and were well received at St. James’s. The funeral of the former afforded the most convincing proof, how much they respect persons who among us are treated with so much contempt. A great number of peers not only accompanied the corpse of this great man, but actually supported the pall. Perhaps it may be here thought, that I allude to some inconsiderate young men of fashion, who, forgetting the respect due to their rank, were actuated merely by their enthusiasm for Garrick.—It was far otherwise. Men illustrious on account of their merit, and among others lord Camden, who some years before had been chancellor of England, paid this mark of respect to their immortal countryman.

The friends of Garrick, after his retreat from the stage, wished him to become a member of parliament.

liament. It depended wholly on himself, to aspire to and receive this honourable mark of distinction ; but his advanced age made him rather anxious to enjoy the great fortune which he had acquired, amidst the calm and tranquillity of a country life.

When shall we see our German actors honoured in this manner ? If great talents could procure such a distinction with us, they would long since have met with their reward. It is not necessary to be inspired with the zeal of patriotism, to rank SCHRODER among the first actors now in Europe. To compare him to Le Kain, would be doing the greatest injustice : it is only necessary to see these two perform, to be of my way of thinking. The plays of Shakespeare, on which Garrick founded his reputation, lose nothing of their force or beauty in the mouth of Schroder ; but his own countrymen, so liberal in their praise of every thing foreign, have not yet been so just, either sufficiently to appreciate his merits, or those master pieces of the English theatres.

A person of the name of Stevens, who died in 1783, was the inventor of an entertainment equally singular and original, which he called *Lectures on Heads*. This consisted in comical and satirical ob-

servations upon all ranks and classes in the nation.

The author displayed a thorough knowledge of the world, much wit, and a great deal of gaiety in his representations. To animate his narration, and to give force to his ideas, he procured a prodigious number of portraits, the physiognomy and dress of which were expressive of those characters, and occupations, which he ridiculed.

He knew how to imitate their voice, their looks, and their manner, with the most happy adroitness. Women of the town, barristers, physicians, clergymen, merchants, officers, men of learning, artists, ladies of fashion, and billingsgates; in one word, all the professions, copied by Stevens, were caricatured before the public with the utmost humour and gaiety.

It was very seldom that this performer was trivial; every thing that he said was full of that *practical philosophy*, which is as instructive as necessary. He usually ended his lecture with a satire against himself, in which he never spared his own foibles.



It has been often attempted, but always without success, to establish a French theatre in London. The last effort was in 1752. A great number of French actors were then engaged at a prodigious expence; and a play-house was fitted up in the most costly manner for their reception. When the first representation was announced, an uncommon number of people of all ranks and descriptions assembled on the occasion.

The comedians expected a disagreeable reception; but the noise and the catcalls of a tumultuous populace soon made them lose all their courage. It was in vain that they attempted to begin: the clamours and the uninterrupted hisses of the pit and galleries, joined to showers of orange-peel, always prevented them. Not one of the actors had the boldness to appear a second time on the stage; and no other resource was left them, but to escape through a private door.

Some days afterwards, they risked another attempt. A great number of young men of fashion, armed with swords, placed themselves in the boxes, while their servants, and several people hired for the purpose, occupied the centre of the pit, to second them in case of need. When the curtain drew up, this served as a signal for the attack.

The stage was instantly covered with oranges ; the actors took to their heels, and the champions from the boxes and pit joined each other sword in hand. In a short time the affray became general ; the girandoles and the crystal branches were broken in a thousand pieces. The ladies fainted away, and the gentlemen who had the rashness to draw upon the people, had their swords broken in pieces, and were obliged to retire, beaten and covered with blood. This tumult was concluded with the entire destruction of the play-house, after several persons had been killed, and many wounded, who might truly be said to have suffered martyrdom on account of their attachment to the French theatre.

After this unfortunate attempt, who would have thought that such an absurd project would have been again revived ? However, in 1778, a society of persons of quality, headed by the duchess dowager of Bedford, projected the renewal of the same scheme, and, having formed the plan, persisted in its execution.

French comedians were already sent for from Paris, an agreement was entered into with them, the most advantageous promises held out, and money advanced for the journey : in one word,

all

all the arrangements were completed. In a few days, however, the news-papers were full of fatires, both in verse and prose, against this undertaking : songs were sung in every street, ridiculing the French stage ; and, what was undoubtedly more disadvantageous than any thing else, Palmer, an actor belonging to Drury-Lane, addressed the public in a prologue, in which he besought them not to patronise a foreign, at the expence of the national theatres. His petition was received with uncommon applause, and the dispositions of the people made evident by the general enthusiasm of the audience.

This Anglo-gallic society accordingly concluded, that it would be very dangerous to persist in their scheme ; and, in all human probability, it will never be revived.

The concerts in London are allowed to be very grand, and the English in general prefer them to the music of the opera-house ; but as the price of a ticket is half-a-guinea, none but the higher ranks can receive any gratification from them.

Ranelagh is incomparably superior to any thing of the same kind in Europe. Its immense

saloon and magnificent illuminations, the continual motion of the people of fashion who assemble there in crowds, and the delicious music, make this a most fascinating and enchanting spectacle. It must however be confessed, that there is a certain sameness and melancholy in this place of entertainment, which, with all its grandeur, gives disgust:—people of rank accordingly never spend more than two hours there.

Vauxhall Gardens are situated in a pleasant village of the same name, on the banks of the Thames, about two miles distant from Westminster-bridge; and part of the company go there by water. One shilling only is paid for entrance, and it is not at all uncommon to see six thousand persons there at once. The walks are but badly lighted; in some places, however, the lamps, which consist of a great variety of colours, are distributed with great taste. The orchestra, which is in the open air, is placed under an amphitheatre, erected in form of a temple, surrounded with elegant porticoes, and brilliantly illuminated. In the most agreeable part of the garden, there is a statue erected in honour of Handel, and this is the only one in the whole place.

About forty years since, a new association, under the

the name of the *Atric Society*, was formed in the capital. This was held in a noble hall, where sometimes vocal and sometimes instrumental music, but always of an exquisite kind, was introduced between compositions in poetry and prose, which were recited in the most elegant and engaging manner.

A foreigner occasioned the annihilation of this rational entertainment, soon after its institution. One may with great justice affirm, that this person has in an eminent degree contributed to the progress of luxury in England ; and it is not a little remarkable, that a woman who has occasioned such an extraordinary revolution in the manners and the pleasures of a nation, should be at this moment languishing amidst all the horrors of wretchedness.

This lady is a native of Germany ; an honour, however, which none of her countrymen have ever claimed, either in her affluence or adversity. She arrived in London about twenty-five years since, at an age when a person of her sex has no right to flatter herself with making conquests. Indeed she possessed neither youth nor beauty, and was so ignorant that she could only speak bad German, and a few words of French.



Who could have imagined, that a person of this kind would have *set the fashions* to the most capricious and phlegmatic nation in Europe ?

At first so far was she from forming sanguine expectations, that her utmost efforts were exerted in supplying her daily wants. Her means of existence depended entirely on her voice, which had nothing extraordinary in it ; with it, however, she resolved to captivate the public. In consequence of this determination, she procured three musicians, and gave concerts at one shilling a ticket. Being successful in her undertaking, she augmented her orchestra, and raised the price of entrance.

Soon afterwards, her happy stars made her acquainted with a lady of quality, who became captivated with her talents ; for although Mrs. Cornelys could neither sing nor speak with elegance, she nevertheless possessed a sound judgment, an uncommon taste, and an imagination inexhaustible in inventions.

From this moment, she conceived the idea of gratifying the English nobility by entertainments, such indeed as had never before her time been seen  
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in Europe. In consequence of this plan, she hired Carlisle-House, furnished it in a most magnificent stile, and procured two thousand seven hundred subscribers. On the anniversary of the institution, she was allowed to give a masked-ball, to which any one could be admitted by a ticket, the price of which was two guineas. She herself has often assured me, that on these occasions she has had upwards of eight thousand visitors.

The magical genius of this woman knew how to vary her entertainments in a thousand different shapes. Sometimes she exhibited colonades, and triumphal arches, grandly illuminated; at other times she metamorphosed her apartments into gardens, planted with walks of orange-trees, and adorned with fountains, inscriptions, and transparent paintings, surrounded by garlands of flowers, and variegated lamps of a thousand beautiful tints. A whole *suite* of rooms were richly furnished, so as to imitate the manners and luxury of foreign nations, in the Indian, Persian, and Chinese stiles, while nine thousand wax-candles, placed with great art, produced a fine effect to the spectators.

The fairy queen of this enchanted palace knew no other avarice than *glory*; money had few or no

charms for her, and she thought herself amply recompensed by the praises that were lavished on her taste.

Far from amassing riches, she contracted immense debts. She owed to her wax-chandler alone, three thousand pounds.

This carelessness and prodigality at last occasioned her to be arrested, and afterwards sent to the king's-bench prison. Her situation was then truly singular; she obtained permission, during *term time*, now and then to spread pleasure and joy throughout the capital, and was obliged next day to return to gaol.

In a short time, her creditors seized on her effects; and after having for twelve years, by her luxurious and voluptuous entertainments, merited the appellation of the *Queen of taste*, she is now actually obliged to subsist on the casual assistance of her former benefactors.

The construction of the Pantheon, which in grandeur and extent exceeds that of Rome, proves that Mrs. Cornelys's lessons were not thrown away upon the English. The subscription, which amount-  
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ed to seventy thousand pounds sterling, was not sufficient to complete such a noble edifice. Every thing that is great, majestic, and magnificent, has been displayed in this temple of Comus.

At a masked-ball, at which I was present, the looking-glasses with which the dome and the other apartments were furnished, cost thirty-six thousand pounds sterling; they were not, however, bought, but only hired for the occasion. The most brilliant concerts are generally given here; and this is one of the few public places, except the theatres, that the royal family honour with their presence. The managers recompense in a noble manner the musicians who perform at this place. The celebrated Ajugari sung here during the winter of 1777, and had one hundred pounds sterling a night, although he gave only two ariettes each time.

Masquerades are sometimes given at the Pantheon, and sometimes at the Opera-House. This kind of diversion, however grand it may appear, in other respects does not seem in the least congenial to the national character, which is grave, and but little allied to the follies of dancing and grimace. The crowds of masks, and the ingenious and magnificent dresses displayed on those occasions, are the only

only circumstances that can give any pleasure to a native, or even a foreigner.

The King is a great enemy to this diversion, and it is said that his majesty was acquainted with general Luttrell's project, in the year 1771, to disturb an entertainment of this kind by going there in the *character* of a corpse.

The English still continue to take a great delight in the public gardens, near the metropolis, where they assemble and drink tea together, in the open air. The number of these in the neighbourhood of the capital is amazing, and the order, regularity, neatness, and even elegance of them, are truly admirable. They, however, are very rarely frequented by people of fashion; but the middle and lower ranks go there often, and seem much delighted with the music of an organ, which is usually played in an adjoining building.

Of all the nations in Europe, the English are most susceptible of the pleasures of *walking*. It is on account of this, that London possesses so many charming places for indulging that propensity. St. James's-Park, the Green-Park, and Kensington Gardens, are frequented by a prodigious concourse of people,



people, and on a Sunday are visited by thousands. The Royal Gardens at Kew, Richmond, and Hampton-Court, also draw a number into the country during the summer.

The pleasures of the chase, of which the English are still very fond, are followed with great avidity during the autumn. It is not at all uncommon to see an hundred men on horseback, leaping hedges, ditches, and five-barred gates after a fox. The laws in regard to hunting are strictly observed, and shelter the farmer from the injuries so usual in other nations.

Among the diversions most common in the country, may be reckoned *fives*, and *bowls*; the spectators are always interested in the game, by means of bets. It is very singular, that *shooting at a mark* is never practised in any part of England: the reason, however, is plain; they have not fortified towns to defend, and are in no fear of an invasion. Of course, there is nothing to induce them to an exercise, from which no utility could result.

Horse-races are among the number of those diversions peculiar to the genius of the nation. The ancient Greeks were also fascinated with the same  
amusement,

amusement, and similar sports were celebrated by the poets of that famous people. A foreigner can never feel himself so much interested in these, as an Englishman; he will be fully satisfied with having seen them once. About twenty years since, a famous horse called *Childers*, who is said to have been the best courser ever seen in England, died. On this occasion, a thousand portraits were engraved of him, and his praises were sung in every street. On an inscription below the print, it was asserted that, after an exact calculation, this animal had been proved to be *fleeter than the wind*.

The passion for betting, that prevails on the race-grounds of Newmarket and Epsom, is astonishing. It is not uncommon to see persons risk all their fortunes there on a single match.

Afs-racing is also very frequent, in the neighbourhood of country towns: they cannot, however, be placed among the number of the national diversions; yet wagers are frequently laid, even upon them.

The passion of *betting* is so very strong among the English, that the pensioners of Chelsea and Greenwich Hospitals, being unable to indulge themselves

themselves in either horse or ass-races, have been known to wager on the *speed* of vermin.

I shall finish this sketch of the favourite diversions among these people, with some account of their Clubs, which are generally a source both of pleasure and utility : these clubs add very much to the society, and serve to propagate their republican genius and public spirit. The number in the capital is astonishing. Every rank and situation of life has one peculiarity adapted to itself, and each has its own proper and distinct name.

The members of some of them are so opulent, and so numerous, that they often subscribe large sums, by means of which they carry their plans of patriotism, or charity, into execution. Among these are the *Humane Society*, which gives premiums for preserving the lives of their fellow-creatures ; the *Whig Club*, which guards against the usurpations of the sovereign ; and the *Bill of Rights*, which watches over the privileges of the nation : this latter was one of the chief supports of Mr. Wilkes.

But of all these, the most extraordinary without doubt are the *Debating Societies*, whose members meet merely to dispute. Such institutions exist

in no other city in Europe. There is one called the *Robin Hood*, which has continued from the beginning of the present century, and has had the honour of being frequented by Swift, Goldsmith, Foote, Garrick, and a crowd of celebrated men.

It is in this society, that a great number of famous lawyers and orators, among whom may be included lord Mansfield, first displayed their talents to the public.

I have been often astonished in these assemblies (for they are now very numerous in London) to see the lowest of the populace evince a perfect knowledge of ancient and modern history. The application which they make of this, and the arguments which they opposed to their adversaries, appeared to me very wonderful.

Those of my readers, who are prejudiced against the English nation, and who, consequently, may be tempted to accuse me of partiality in delineating their character, and praising their noble, generous, and disinterested manner of thinking and of acting, are requested, after the almost infinite number of facts which I have recited in the course of this.

this work, to read the following, as it will speak very forcibly in favour of my argument :

I happened one evening in the month of December, 1778, to visit the Debating Society in Foster-Lane, Cheap-side. The war had just broke out between England and France; and it is well known that the English had good reason, at that time, to be irritated against all their enemies. The national antipathy therefore, against the French, was carried to its utmost extent among all ranks and degrees of the people.

It was at this critical period that a Frenchman had the rashness to venture into the assembly, and to rise to defend the conduct of his countrymen in regard to the American war. I could scarce believe my eyes, and I know not whether I was most astonished at the imprudence of the Frenchman, or the liberality of the English, who allowed him to proceed. Let any one represent to his own imagination, this foreigner appearing in the middle of a hostile nation, and in a barbarous and disagreeable accent abusing them: will he not be astonished when I inform him that he was heard with the utmost attention, and, so far from being treated with contempt, thanked by the chairman

“ for,



“ for having so much confidence in the generosity  
“ of the English nation, as to deliver his senti-  
“ ments with candour, and frankness, on the most  
“ delicate and interesting subjects !!! ”

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## CHAPTER VII.

*Reflections on the Finances—The English Liberty and Constitution—Marine—Pressing of Seamen—Greenwich Hospital—Sailors—Admiral Keppel—Army—Militia—East-India Company—Arts and Sciences—British Museum—Style of the English Gardens—Conclusion.*

IF the reader will give himself the trouble to weigh with care the great number of facts and anecdotes with which I have been anxious to intersperse my observations on England, he will find that the pretended declension of that empire, foretold and announced by so many contemporary writers, has not as yet taken place.

That kingdom, however, is at this very moment in a critical, if not a desperate situation, notwithstanding

standing her foreign connections, her riches, her commerce, and her influence.

Great Britain, which cannot naturally be considered, in the balance of Europe, but as belonging to the second order of kingdoms, has been elevated to the rank of one of the first powers in the world by bravery, wealth, liberty, and the happy consequences of an excellent political system. For many years that island wielded the trident of Neptune in her victorious hand, and, absolute mistress of the ocean, covered every sea with her fleets. It will be a problem for posterity to solve, how that state has created and maintained such an extensive commerce, and amassed such immense riches, at a time when the spirit of industry had made so great a progress among her neighbours, and even Holland herself had procured a decided superiority over all the other powers on the continent.

But although the sun of English greatness is not yet set, it is probable that in a few years we shall see the power of that people extinguished ; not insensibly, but all at once. The very first war that they are so rash as to engage in, will, perhaps, whatever may be its event, precipitate this fatal and too certain catastrophe. In the political, as in the national world, death has planted the seeds of destruction  
along

along with those of existence ; and, though those may discover and unfold themselves, either sooner or later, yet in the end they will never lose their effect.

Let us recollect that, but a very few years since, a national debt of a hundred millions gave the utmost tension that it was then susceptible of, to the spring of this political machine. The facility, however, with which they found means to pay off the interest of this immense sum, made them believe, that they possessed an inexhaustible source of riches, and begat the most dangerous security. They are now, however, though perhaps too late, recovered from this fatal error : a national debt, amounting to the immense sum of two hundred and sixty millions, has at length opened their eyes : the annual revenue is at present incompetent to supply the annual expenditure, which, even in time of peace, amounts to more than fourteen millions. If we add to this, the interest of a debt of one hundred millions, which England must contract the first war she is involved in, it will be politically impossible for the nation to sustain such an additional burthen without becoming bankrupt.

If any unforeseen circumstance should occasion this war, the consequence would be terrible. The

ruin of the richest and most distinguished families would inevitably ensue : the commerce and the maritime greatness of the English would be attacked in their most mortal parts ; and that nation, now so powerful, would be reduced for ever among the second order of European states.

It is perhaps impossible to avert this frightful catastrophe ; the sagest precautions could scarce diminish the evil, or render the consequences less terrible. This awful moment is approaching with the most rapid and alarming celerity ; no one, however, has the resolution to oppose it, and all seem to allow themselves blindly to be led towards the horrid abyss.

I do not, however, know whether a national bankruptcy would involve the bank of England in its ruin. That machine, which is conducted with a complicated, but an excellent mechanism, is the chief support of the credit of the state, of all the great trading companies, and of the principal merchants in the capital, and the provincial towns, both of England and Scotland. Its business is carried on, not by means of gold, but paper ; which will be no longer esteemed, than during the opinion which the public entertain of its value.



To see the excellence of the system adopted by this great people, in its full extent, it ought to be recollected, that notwithstanding the immense commerce of England, in every part of the globe, and her riches, which have become proverbial, yet it is probable, that the *quantum* of ready money circulated throughout the kingdom is very small. According to the best calculation, it does not exceed twenty millions of pounds sterling.

This sum, which scarce served to carry on the American war for a single year, is but little more than what the economy of a certain German sovereign has hoarded up in a short time, and that too in a country not famous for its riches. Similar comparisons will give occasion to many reflections; and I dare affirm, without either being absurd or ridiculous, that a single city in the Empire possesses a larger portion of *specie* than all Great Britain.

The spirit of activity and industry, which animates the whole nation, is the reason that this deficiency of *coin* is not perceptible. As sums of any consequence are generally paid in bank notes, and every object of trade is accomplished by means of paper, it necessarily follows, that *ready money* is never employed but in regard to trifling demands.

This occasions that astonishing and continual circulation, of which Paris and Amsterdam furnish us with a very faint idea, but which, however, is merely *illusory*, when compared to real wealth.

Bank notes, of which the number and the amount are equally unknown, but are said by estimation to exceed more than a hundred millions sterling, together with the astonishing quantity of manufactured commodities, compose the national wealth of England: as long, therefore, as her *paper* maintains its credit, and her warehouses remain furnished, no person will, I think, be inclined to yield to that island the first rank amongst the richest nations in Europe.

Foreigners have but a very small share in the national debt; the English themselves are the greatest creditors of the state. The liquidation of this debt has given rise to the schemes of a multitude of projectors, each of whom affirms, that nothing in the world is more easy. But even their most ingenious plans have proved the great difficulty of such an enterprise. Sometimes even political miracles are performed: but then they must be at least probable; and unfortunately, the payment of two hundred and sixty millions sterling, to which the first war will add another hundred

dred millions, is among those things that may be reckoned impossible. It has been calculated, that if a circle of half-crowns was to be formed around the circumference of our globe, this almost inconceivable sum would not be sufficient to pay the national debt.

However unfortunate the consequences of a national bankruptcy would be to England, they might still be supportable, if they did not affect its political constitution, and civil liberty : the loss of two such inestimable blessings would be fatal indeed.

Both France and Germany still contain a great number of visionary men, who, misled by the turbulent and unquiet genius of the Americans, have attempted to prove that the English constitution abounds with a number of the grossest imperfections. They hoped to see on the other side of the Atlantic ocean, the idea of a perfect republic realised. They imagined that so many great men, instructed by the experience of past ages, and capable of pointing out to their fellow-citizens the true road to happiness, would give grandeur, liberty, and stability, to this new confederation. They have, however, been disappointed in their hopes : the spirit of anarchy seems to distract the

councils of America ; and the opinion which the illustrious Montesquieu formed, concerning the English government, is now confirmed.

It is after this great man that I dare to affirm, that there exists no-where a constitution better adapted than that of England for a powerful society, in which all the individuals are to partake of freedom.

After having read this work, it will be impossible, I think, to forget the value of English liberty : all that I could add further on this head, would be useless : let me however be permitted to mention one more observation, concerning the government.

The equilibrium, or balance of the three bodies who possess the exercise of the legislative power, is truly admirable. The King, the House of Peers, and the Commons of England, are three distinct powers, entirely independent of one another, each enjoying privileges and rights peculiar to itself, mutually observing these, and watching constantly against the infringements of them. The king is the sole source, from whence all honours and dignities flow ; but as he can neither make new laws, nor add to old ones, his preponderance  
is

is not so great in the scale as might be expected.

The House of Peers, besides possessing a share in the legislative power, is also the supreme court of justice in England: it is on this account that the twelve judges, who as such are not peers of parliament, and who are not permitted to deliver their sentiments, unless when called upon, sit among them.

The grand exclusive privilege of the House of Commons, is the possession of the key of the public treasury. Money being in our planet the prime mover of all things, it follows that this last body does not yield in point of importance to the two former. The commons also have a right to impeach state criminals, even if they should be members of the upper-house. On such occasions, a minister, though protected by the monarch himself, cannot escape a trial. Therefore, when an accusation for high-treason is brought into the House of Peers, no defence which may be brought, nor protection which can be exhibited, will prevent the supposed culprit from being committed to the Tower.

According to Montesquieu, the movements of



the political machine in England occasion a continual display of envy, jealousy, avarice, and ambition, which the national liberty allows to appear in their full extent. From the opposition of these passions, factions are produced, which, striking against each other, like the waves of the ocean, reunite and separate anew. These factions, which at a certain distance appear to be hurtful, will, when more nearly considered, be found to produce that alternate succession of good and evil which preserves the constitution of every free state.

Sir Robert Walpole adopted two maxims, seemingly very strange: "That every man has his price, and it is only necessary to know that, to be able to procure his support: And, that an English minister is often under the necessity of purchasing the voice of a member of parliament, not to vote against, but according to his conscience."

As there is no political object concerning which it is possible to conceive so many erroneous ideas as the English constitution, we need not be astonished at the prejudices and falsities with which the writings of so many learned foreigners abound. It is not long since the author of a certain critical work, published in Germany, pretended that

Schlozer

Schlozer had given a proof of the most flagrant partiality, by affirming, that the Americans commenced the war against England without being impelled by sufficient motives ; and that, now it was finished, they had not reaped those advantages which they expected. This profound and philosophical historian has advanced nothing concerning an event, perhaps the most remarkable in the present age, without the maturest reflection. But in what consisted the pretended oppression of that people ? Was it not an oppression by which they enjoyed an equal degree of liberty with the freest nations in Europe, England excepted, and by which, in a few years, they acquired a degree of splendour till then unexampled in history ?—Their complaints were undoubtedly just, but surely not sufficiently strong to authorise them to have recourse to arms, as neither their privileges nor their religion were attacked. If they now retain but some feeble traces of their former greatness, if their national happiness is only a vague and chimerical idea, it will perhaps be allowed, that the long and bloody contest with England has been at once equally unsuccessful and disadvantageous.

Great Britain possesses no fortresses ; for one surely cannot give that name to some ramparts, and bastions, erected at the entrance of her har-

bours, or to the Tower of London, that celebrated state prison, formerly the source of so many horrible cruelties. This is now no more than a fort, the walls and gates of which are merely sufficient to stop a tumultuous populace. Its arsenals are less celebrated on account of the warlike stores which they contain, than for the antique and uncommon pieces of armour, guns, mortars, &c. to be met with there. On a platform next to the river, is a battery of sixty large cannon, which, however, are of no service, but to fire a salute on the birth-day of the sovereign, or that of any of the royal family.

An Englishman who has never visited the continent, can have no adequate idea of a fortified place. The ocean, and the floating castles which it sustains, are the sole and indeed the proper bulwarks of the kingdom, and have for more than a thousand years baffled the enterprises of its enemies. If it had been possible to effect a landing in Great Britain, that project would have been attempted during the American war, at the time when the English fleet, dispersed through the four quarters of the globe, allowed the combined fleet to attempt any thing in the channel. Notwithstanding the great preparations made on purpose, such a dangerous experiment was not tried.

In

In the year 1761, a project of this kind was formed by the duke de Choiseul, who was then prime minister of France. Six thousand flat-bottomed boats were prepared, the coast founded, the place of landing determined upon, and, in one word, all the precautions taken likely to insure the most certain success. The English government, however, having received a circumstantial detail of the whole plan, took such effectual measures, that the idea was abandoned. The discovery was made in Paris, by means of an Irishman, of the name of Mac Allester, who by a bold and successful attempt made himself master of the secret. In consequence of this, he set off for London, and fortunately arrived safe with the necessary documents. At the peace, this gentleman was gratified with a considerable sum of money as a recompense for his services.

The excellence of the English navy can only be discovered by those persons, who, being acquainted with the state of the fleets belonging to the other European nations, are enabled to judge by comparison. It is only on board an English man of war, which is handsome, commodious, and even magnificent, that a proper idea can be formed of the character and the riches of that people. An abundance, unknown in the vessels of other nations,

prevails there ; and a number of happy inventions, which can only be imitated by foreigners in a very imperfect manner. These vessels are sheathed with copper, provided with ventilators, ovens, machines for calculating the longitude, alembics for freshening salt water, &c. &c.

The English, in fine, have contrived, by a thousand different expedients, to obviate the dangerous accidents and disagreeable circumstances attendant on long voyages.

The subordination on board their navy is extraordinary ; it surpasses the discipline of a Prussian army. Even the first lieutenant, who is the second person on board, dares never to approach the captain without saluting him with the most profound respect, and paying the most implicit obedience to his commands. The first thing that the officers do on a morning is, to inform themselves *what humour the captain is in* ; his authority being so extensive, that it is absolutely in his power to make the lives of all those around him either happy or miserable. An old sailor, who attended me almost constantly during my stay at Portsmouth, expressed this in one short and emphatic sentence: "**A** ship of war," said he, " is either a heaven or  
" a hell,



“a hell, according to the character and temper of  
“the commander.”

Notwithstanding the situation of England, which has laid her under the necessity from time immemorial to have recourse to a navy for support, her marine was very contemptible in former times. Every maritime town was then obliged to furnish a certain number of vessels in time of war, and these, which were always merchantmen, were filled with soldiers. The city of London fitted out twenty-five vessels, containing six hundred and sixty-two men, to assist Edward III. in the conquest of France. The epoch of the English marine was the reign of Elizabeth; and since that time it has increased to the astonishing degree of greatness and perfection which it has attained in our days. At the end of the American war, it consisted of three hundred and forty-six ships, great and small. Some of these carried one thousand seamen; every one of whom cost the government four pounds per month.

It is almost impossible to conceive the prodigious quantity of provisions, and ammunition, with which the store-houses belonging to the navy are filled. The principal magazines are undoubtedly at Ports-

mouth and Plymouth ; but even in the smallest, such as those at Chatham, Deptford, Sheerness, and Woolwich, there is such an abundance of every necessary, that in one of these more naval stores are deposited than in all the arsenals of Italy.

The manner of *manning* the navy in time of war, is of all the customs in England the most blameable, the more especially as it is not warranted by the laws. As the sailors are forced into the service, and as they on such occasions generally make a stout resistance, the most bloody scenes are frequently occasioned by these encounters. Every friend of humanity must revolt at the idea of a press-gang in a free country ; a practice that entirely overturns every principle of English liberty. Some of the most elegant writers have decried this mode of procuring seamen, and the greatest orators declaimed in parliament against such a scandalous perversion of power ; but the doctrine of *necessity* has hitherto stifled every other consideration. It was in vain that, during the last war, bounties were held out to the seamen ; avarice tempted but a few ; the greater number rather chose to enter on board merchantmen, where there is neither danger nor subordination.

Greenwich

Greenwich hospital is well calculated to encourage the navy. It is one of the noblest and most beautiful buildings in Europe. Its situation on the banks of the Thames is extremely agreeable, and it is finely embellished by majestic domes, colonades, statues, pictures, &c. This establishment serves as an asylum for many thousand invalid sailors, and a still greater number of out-pensioners draw their daily subsistence from it. They all eat in common, are allowed two clean shirts a week, and have new beds every year. Each person sleeps by himself. The neatness which reigns throughout this edifice is truly admirable, and well worthy of imitation.

The English seamen form a particular class by themselves. From their most tender infancy, they are more accustomed to the sea than the land, and never fail to become as boisterous as the elements with which they have been familiar. Add to this, the prejudices common to the rest of the nation, and you may easily conceive that this body of men have something original about them. The manner in which they spend their prize-money, got in time of war, and the hardships which they endure without grumbling, seem to realise and confirm the proverb so common in England, “ that  
“ their

“their sailors get their money like horses, and  
“spend it like asses.”

The higher classes of officers in the navy are greatly respected, on account of their knowledge, their valour, and their experience. Of between seventeen and eighteen who commanded squadrons during the American war, not a single one could be taxed with incapacity.

A great number of their admirals are actually models of honour and probity. Among these, I beg leave to mention admiral Keppel, who, in the year 1779, by the intrigues of lord Sandwich, was tried by a naval court-martial.

The captain of a man of war is generally a person of some consideration in England. I knew an old gentleman called captain O'Brien, who had the honour of entertaining the kings of Portugal and Sicily on board his ship. The pay allowed in the navy is very considerable, and foreigners, on that account, wish for employments in the service; but the jealousy of the people prevents it. Commissions in the sea service are never *venal*, and men of the first rank and quality are obliged to rise from the lowest stations.

The great attention paid to the navy occasions the land forces to be neglected. In the army, commissions are bought and sold : a barbarous usage, and diametrically opposite to all the principles of a military establishment. The ambition of a land officer is entirely stifled by the little respect paid to his profession : he therefore neglects his duty, and loses all relish for the service. There are some English generals, to whom the subalterns of a Prussian regiment could give lessons on the art of war.

As a free people are, with great reason, jealous of nothing so much as a large army in time of peace, all the good patriots declare against it. In the commencement of the year 1785, the regular troops in England amounted to only 29,345 : some members of parliament, however, spoke of this as an *abuse*, and wished the number to be considerably decreased.

A standing army is now become a necessary evil, in all the European states ; and the English have at length been constrained to adopt this custom : they are, however, extremely careful to provide against the bad consequences resulting from it. The troops are paid and maintained by an act of parliament, called the mutiny bill ; but



as it remains in force for only twelve months, it must be renewed, at the expiration of that period, by the three branches of the legislature ; else the army is of course annihilated. As long as this law continues unrepealed, the English need never be apprehensive of arbitrary power. The incredible celerity with which the last revolution in Sweden was effected, cannot encourage, much less serve as a model for, a king of England. The better, nay, the most numerous part of the Swedish nation desired to see the monarch more independent in his authority, and less restricted in the exercise of his prerogative ; they therefore longed for a signal to second his intentions. In England, on the contrary, a similar wish could exist in no other heart, than that of a despicable courtier, or an inhabitant of Bedlam.

The liberty of the nation is also supported by a still more potent auxiliary, which the people acquired under the wise administration of lord Chatham.—This master-piece of policy, like a thousand other interesting circumstances concerning England, is either unknown or undervalued in Germany.—I now allude to the militia ; an idea original in its kind, and respectable by its consequences in the eyes of the philosopher and the statesman. Although it somewhat resembles a similar

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lar establishment on the continent, it must however be allowed by every impartial man, that the militia of Switzerland cannot be compared with that of England.

As it was determined that these troops were not to serve in foreign countries, but were only intended to defend their families, their household gods, and the altars of their religion, all the people in the kingdom, respectable on account of their wealth, their rank, and their employments, offered their services, and were enrolled in troops levied solely for the defence of the nation. Lord Rochford, who had been ambassador in France, the duke of Richmond, at this present moment a minister of state, and a lieutenant-general in the army, the marquis of Lansdowne, the dukes of Devonshire, Manchester, &c. all thought it an honour to serve in this patriotic body. The duke of Grafton, after he had been dismissed from his situation of prime minister of England, accepted the command of a regiment of militia, and actually submitted to the orders of general (now lord) Amherst, whom he had a few months before obliged to wait his leisure in an ante-chamber.

The duke, decorated with the order of the garter, was seen during the review at Coxheath  
confounded

confounded in the ranks with the other officers. This review was one of the most singular spectacles that I have ever beheld during the course of my travels. The camp consisted of eighteen thousand foldiers, all of whom, but two or three battalions, were militia. For many years there had not been such a great army in the neighbourhood of the capital. Prodigious crowds were, therefore, attracted by the novelty of the circumstance: the sovereign himself, to whom it was also new, having never before seen but a few regiments in Hyde Park, was so transported with the scene, that he cried out to the commander in chief, "O Amherst, what a fine sight this is!" This exclamation, as the king was at that time very unpopular, gave occasion to many sharp and satirical remarks.

A body of eighteen thousand men has not any thing in its appearance that can excite the wonder of a foldier, more especially a German one; it was something more worthy of the eye of a philosopher than that of a military man, which attracted my attention.

There is no difference either in the discipline, evolutions, or exercise of the militia and the regulars; at least, my eye, although accustomed to the Prussian exercise, could not perceive any. On the contrary,

contrary, the former distinguish themselves by their activity, and attachment to their duty. It seems to me, that those men who serve the state by choice, serve it also with pleasure.

The army is, in general, a strange mixture of men, commanded for the most part by officers whose necessities oblige them to follow that profession : the nobility prefer the militia.

A certain great monarch of the present age had not a proper idea of this establishment, else he would not have been offended with the court of St. James's, for sending a minister plenipotentiary to him, who had only the rank of major in the militia.

The duke of Manchester, a colonel belonging to the same body, was actually at that time in the quality of ambassador at the court of Versailles.

The national militia, in the year 1778, formed an army of twenty thousand men ; since that time, it has been proposed to increase them to forty thousand.

The East-India company may be looked upon as a political phenomenon. This society of merchants.

chants possess territories, the inhabitants belonging to which amount to sixteen millions. England, Scotland, and Ireland, hardly contain half so many. During the last war, they maintained at their own expence an army of eighty thousand men. The revenues of their dominions amount to more than six millions of pounds annually, and some of their servants have, in a few years, realized fortunes of little less than half a million sterling ! To give a proper idea of their immense riches, I have only to remark to the reader, that if the sovereigns of Denmark, Sweden, Naples, Sardinia, and Poland, were to unite the sums yearly levied in their kingdoms, they would not amount to so much as those received by the East-India company.

It sacrifices about two millions per annum, to support its military establishment in time of peace ; and in time of war the expence is nearly doubled : for they do not possess the talent in Asia, as in Europe, to persuade, or rather to force, the soldier to encounter all the horrors of war, for a morsel of bread, and a drop of water. Not only the English troops, but the sepoy, receive large pay in that part of the world.

The debt of the East-India company, in 1785,  
amounted



amounted to seven millions; a moderate sum when compared with their revenue, and which, by the adoption of a proper system of economy, they might soon pay off. It is the want of this economy, which at such an immense distance from Europe it is very difficult to enforce, joined to the insatiable avarice of their servants, both civil and military, that has repeatedly brought the proprietors to the verge of bankruptcy: it is certain, however, that Mr. Pitt's bill put an end to many abuses.

In the year 1776, the company had a fleet of forty-nine ships, each carrying twenty guns, in their service, without including a prodigious number of small vessels employed in trading on the coasts of Asia. Sixteen of the larger vessels have since been deducted from this number, on account of the representations of the lords of the admiralty, who pretended that so many vessels of their dimensions occasioned a scarcity of timber, which could not be supplied by any other part of the world but their own forests.

The present state of the arts and sciences in England, is too well known to my countrymen, for me to pretend to be able to say any thing  
new

new on that important head. I shall, however, take the liberty to make a few reflections on that subject.

The foundation of literary society in that country, is liberty; that liberty which the natives have continually before their eyes, and which they never lose sight of in any of their pursuits. They do not know what it is to be excited to study by means of pensions, which are indeed little less than honourable fetters, that prevent us from saying and writing what we please.

The Royal Society includes amongst its members the greatest part of the English peerage, as does also the Antiquarian Society, which first made us acquainted with the celebrated ruins of Palmyra, Balbec, and Athens. The nobility do not in general contribute by means of their writings to the splendour of letters, and the progress of science; they willingly, however, employ their riches in defraying the expences of these establishments.

The learned in other parts of Europe form a class by themselves, and are in general either persecuted or despised. In England, the ministers, the magistrates, the barristers, the physicians, the clergy,

clergy, the artists, the merchants, and even the military, all in one word think it a glory to be thought men of letters, and to forget, when they assemble together, every circumstance that appertains to their rank or their occupations. The Royal Academy has a certain part of Somerset-House assigned to the purposes of their institution. In this noble mansion, which may be called a palace (for it is one of the noblest efforts of modern architecture) they have an annual exhibition of the works of the greatest painters.

It is well known that, in England, distinguished merit may aspire to honours and dignities with more certainty of success than in any other country. I could quote examples of this without number; such as those of Prior, Addison, and a great many more, whose writings raised them to the most distinguished offices in the state. Locke was appointed to the honourable and lucrative situation of Master of the Mint, and was succeeded in his employment by the immortal Newton. Bacon, Clarendon, and Chatham acquired their fortunes and their titles solely by their personal merit, and their attachment to the sciences.

Services done to the nation never fail being remunerated in a manner worthy of a great people.

The

The elder Forster is perhaps the only instance to the contrary. He had the misfortune to incur the hatred of a minister unworthy of his high rank, and who, notwithstanding that he had once treated him with the warmest regard, persecuted him afterwards with a decided and unmerited aversion. The destiny of this learned man was peculiarly unfortunate: at a time when his affairs were very much deranged, he had of his own accord presented the Queen with a great many birds from the islands in the Southern Ocean, which it had cost him much labour and many years to collect and preserve, and which he could have sold at a very high price in England. Her Majesty accepted the present, and, to the astonishment of every one, forgot to recompense this celebrated traveller.

His son seems to have been enveloped in the unhappy destiny of his father. England lost him while very young, and Germany to this day laments his death. Never did any other foreigner write the English language with so much elegance and precision. Many of the critics rank the history of his voyages among the number of their classical works.

Baretti, a learned Italian, who has resided more  
than

than twenty years in London, has also attempted to write in English, but without success.

This author does not belie the character of his nation. Entirely unacquainted with every thing that concerns the people among whom he has lived for so many years ; not devoid, however, of sense, but yet superstitious in the extreme ; this person has not entirely forgotten the use of the poignard ; for some time since he assassinated an Englishman, in the open street, who according to his account had attacked him.

Such an atrocious action subjected him to a criminal prosecution : he however escaped punishment, because there was no witness to the transaction ; and the *dead man*, who alone knew the truth, could not appear to contradict him \*.

The

- \* The Translator here begs leave to observe, that he should do violence to his own feelings, if he did not state, that an English jury, after a full investigation of this transaction, acquitted Mr. Baretti, who, instead of assassinating an unoffending man, as is implied by the text, only defended his own life against the assaults of a ruffian. Some of the first characters in the kingdom attended the trial, and gave the most honourable testimonies of the worth and goodness of a gentle-



The British Museum is rather a monument of the progress of the arts and sciences, than the means of giving them a higher degree of perfection. The cabinet of natural history, and the collection of manuscripts, medals, mechanical inventions, &c. are very interesting, and in point of value almost inestimable. To these, the nation every year makes new additions, not unworthy of the wealth and the greatness of the people.

Sometimes whole cabinets are bought, and incorporated with this immense collection; there was one year, for example, when the parliament purchased the cabinet of the celebrated Sir William Hamilton, for the sum of eleven thousand pounds sterling. In the museum, a copy of Magna Charta is preserved. The printed books are contemptible in point of number, and but ill agree with the rest of this magnificent establishment. They ought to be augmented.

The house itself is undoubtedly one of the finest, the most spacious, and most agreeable mansions in the metropolis: it was built by

man, whose life was shortened by the most cruel neglect, and whose very memory has been loaded with unmerited obloquy.

Montague, the favourite of Charles II. To this noble enterprize, he set apart a large portion of an immense fortune. The most famous painters belonging to the court of that magnificent and voluptuous monarch, such as La Fosse, Rousseau, and Monnayer, here exhausted all the charms and the secrets of their art. Their works are viewed even at this day with rapture. The order and the arrangement which prevail in this institution, are not, however, equal to the other parts of such a noble establishment.

The greatest collection of coins and medals, perhaps in the whole world, belongs to a private gentleman of London. It is to Dr. Hunter, a famous physician, who amassed great riches by his profession, and who died some years since, that the nation is indebted for this superb cabinet; to the furnishing of which he dedicated fifty years, and more than one half of an immense fortune. It is now still more valuable, as it has been greatly augmented within these last ten years.

An Englishman of the name of \* Duane, possessed a collection almost equal to the former.

\* Mr. Duane is since dead.

A great number of coins struck by the Parthians, and many other nations celebrated in ancient history, rendered this cabinet uncommonly interesting. Hunter purchased and added this to his own.

The immense cabinet of natural history, belonging to Sir Ashton Lever\*, is another proof of English magnificence. Never, perhaps, has human industry formed such a complete collection of rare and valuable birds !

The manner of laying out their gardens, is the sole art in which the English have not taken some model for their guide. The disgusting sameness, and tedious uniformity, which all Europe had adopted, was despised by them : they therefore followed nature step by step, and only called in art now and then to their assistance. This method, for a long time the subject of raillery and disdain to other nations, begins every day to find new partisans.

The traces of labour are almost imperceptible in the formation of an English garden :

\* Sir Ashton Lever is also dead, and his collection is now in the possession of Mr. Parkinson.

and yet, nevertheless, the expences are very considerable: the lawns, which resemble so many verdant carpets, must be constantly cut, and attended to with uncommon care. The gardeners also receive great wages.

It is singular, that there is not, throughout the whole kingdom, one garden in the French style; they are all entirely in a taste peculiar to themselves. The most remarkable, on account of their beauty and extent, are the Marquis of Buckingham's at Stowe, the Duke of Devonshire's at Chatsworth, and the King's at Kew.

Other parts of the country abound with parks, so charming and romantic, that nothing seems wanting but shepherds, to make the beholder imagine himself in the midst of one of the most delicious provinces of Arcadia. The principal of these are situated at Richmond, Windsor, and Greenwich.

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I HAVE now given a sketch of that famous Island, the people of which, according to Bosuet,

fuet, like the ocean that furrounds them, are in perpetual commotion; an observation which a hundred years experience seems to confirm. In England, events are continually taking place, which merit the attention of every philosophical observer, and elevate the annals of the present age to the historical dignity of ancient times. LIBERTY, that inexpressible blessing, is, and has always been, the source of all these heroical and sublime actions, which only excite our barren admiration.

Long before the people had acquired, or, if you will, conquered their great charter, Alfred inserted these remarkable words in his last will, "The English ought to be as free as their thoughts." No people abhor despotism, and every thing that may lead to it, so much as these proud Islanders. This aversion justifies the exclamation of Macaulay, the celebrated female historian: "The sight of a despot," says she, "has never sullied the purity of my regards."

No nation can boast of having for so long a period of time possessed so many social and political blessings. To see so many millions of men, enjoying an uninterrupted possession of rights,  
worthy



worthy of the dignity of human nature, is a circumstance unexampled in history.

It is in that fortunate Island alone, that the accumulation of riches, luxury, pleasures, and all their dangerous consequences, has not given to any one class of citizens a pernicious and dangerous ascendancy over the laws.

*F I N I S.*

